FILM

★ One of the most remarkable documentary successes of recent years —

'THE NUTRITION FILM' is now being handled for theatrical distribution by

KINOGRAPH DISTRIBUTORS LTD.

191 WARDOUR STREET, W.1.

under the title of

'ENOUGH TO EAT?'

★ ***Read how the Press greeted this film:***

THE TIMES: 'A valuable contribution to our knowledge of a problem of national importance . . . While the lesson of the film is vigorous and direct, the producers must be complimented on their avoidance of extreme cases.'

THE DAILY HERALD: 'This is one of the most arresting social pictures ever produced . . . The film is powerful in its reticence. It . . . reveals the hidden dangers sapping the strength of the nation.'

MANCHESTER GUARDIAN: 'It is the first film to show the effects of poverty on the diet and growth of the nation and it is to be hoped that it will prove the starting point for a series of similar productions on problems which should be the concern of every member of the community.'

THE NEWS CHRONICLE: 'The most searching things in the picture are the little interviews with poor mothers struggling bravely to feed their families, with very small incomes, and the scenes in which children figure.'

THE KINEMATOGRAPH WEEKLY: '. . . of absorbing interest . . . No showman need rely on any sense of public spirit as an excuse for its presentation. It is entertaining as well as a valuable social sidelight on one of the most important subjects affecting every human being.'

Another new and entertaining film

'A SCRATCH MEAL WITH MARCEL BOULESTIN'

is being distributed by

ASSOCIATED BRITISH FILM DISTRIBUTORS

169 OXFORD STREET, W.1.

Press Comments:

THE EVENING STANDARD: '. . . *amusing running commentary . . . useful tips . . . There is nothing to be done but to see for yourself how cunningly and quickly M. Boulestin cuts up an onion.*'

CINEMA: '*Monsieur Boulestin, celebrated gastronome and artist of the kitchen, showed what a bumper meal can be made from a few scraps of chicken, some vegetables and a few eating apples!*'

LIST OF BOOKINGS TO MATURE ON "MARCH OF TIME" SECOND YEAR

For its second year "MARCH OF TIME" has arranged contracts for showing in more than 1200 Cinemas. Below is a selection from a list that covers the British Isles and Irish Free State.

CINEMA.	PLACE.
Forum ...	Southampton
Futurist ...	Birmingham.
Plaza... ...	Regent Street.
Paramount ...	Tottenham Court Rd.
Capitol ...	Cardiff.
Westover ...	Bournemouth.
Kings ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Manchester.
Whiteladies ...	Bristol.
Paramount ...	Liverpool.
Regal ...	Torquay.
Paramount ...	Leeds.
Paramount ...	Newcastle.
Paramount ...	Glasgow.
Savoy ...	Brighton.
Astoria ...	Cliftonville.
Granada ...	Dover.
Central or Playhouse	Folkestone.
Rivoli ...	Southend.
Regent ...	Gt. Yarmouth.
Marina ...	Lowestoft.
Majestic or Ritz	Oxford.
Super Electra, Palace	Oxford.
Olympia ...	Newport, Mon.
Castle ...	Merthyr.
Beau Nash ...	Bath.
Pavilion ...	Ramsgate.
Silver Cinema	Worcester.
Theatre Royal	Preston.
Synod Hall ...	Edinburgh.
Palace Grand or Winter Gdn.	Blackpool.
Capitol ...	Dublin.
Grafton ...	Dublin.
Odeon ...	South Harrow.
Empire ...	Mile End.
Empress ...	Hackney.
Commodore	Hammersmith.
Forum ...	Fulham Road.
Forum ...	Ealing.
Dominion ...	Southall.
Embassy ...	Harrow.
Carlton ...	Winchmore Hill.
Ritz	Bowes Park.
Cameo ...	Bear Street.
Alma or Empire	Luton.
Bruce Grove	Tottenham.
Coliseum ...	Harrow.
Tatler ...	Charing Cross Road.
Tussauds ...	Baker Street.
Lido ...	Golders Green.
Ritz	Edgware
South Cinema	Hackney.
Hippodrome	Willesden.
Ritz	Neasden.
Olympia ...	Shoreditch.
Palaceum ...	Commercial Road.
Rialto, Plaza or Ritz	Maidenhead.
Hippodrome	Poplar.
Rex	Stratford.
Carlton ...	Upton Park.
Palace ...	Kensal Rise.
Coronation ...	Manor Park.
Capitol ...	Barking.

CINEMA.	PLACE
Princess ...	Dagenham.
Blue Hall ...	Edgware Road.
Dominion ...	Walthamstow.
Queens ...	Bayswater.
Regal ...	Uxbridge.
Majestic ...	Woodford.
Ritz	Harringay.
Savoy ...	Acton.
Savoy ...	Enfield.
Curzon ...	Mayfair.
Tatler ...	Liverpool.
Kings ...	Liverpool.
Princes ...	Liverpool.
Empire ...	Chatham.
Ritz Central or Palace	Maidstone.
Pavilion ...	Cork.
Grand Central	Dublin.
Majestic, Regal Super or Plaza	Gravesend.
Victoria ...	Cambridge.
Hippodrome	Rotherhithe.
Palace ...	Camberwell.
Playhouse ...	Balham.
Mayfair ...	Tooting.
Majestic ...	Mitcham.
Savoy ...	Croydon.
Hippodrome	Croydon.
Regal ...	Purley.
Majestic or St. James	Kings Lynn.
Savoy ...	Wandsworth.
Prince of Wales	Lewisham.
Capitol ...	Forest Hill.
Capitol ...	Blackheath.
Theatre ...	Elephant & Castle.
Hippodrome	Putney.
Savoy ...	Teddington.
Trocadero ...	Southport.
Wembley Hall Cinema	Wembley.
Odeon ...	Wimbledon.
Odeon ...	Barnet.
Hippodrome or Empire	Greenwich.
Odeon ...	Haverstock Hill.
State & Rialto	Dartford.
Odeon ...	Finchley.
Dominion ...	Hounslow.
Cranstons ...	Glasgow.
Hippodrome	Belfast.
Odeon ...	Derby.
Palace ...	Leicester.
Theatre Royal	Bradford.
Pioneer ...	Dewsbury.
Theatre Royal	Halifax.
Hippodrome	Sheffield.
Princes ...	Portsmouth.
Tivoli or Troxy	Portsmouth.
Cinema ...	Aberdare.
Radio Centre	East Grinstead.
Exchange ...	Lincoln.
Regal ...	Watford.
Odeon ...	Chingford.
Ritz	Doncaster.
Dorchester ...	Hull.
Majestic ...	West Hartlepool.
Elite	Middlesbrough.

EDGAR ANSTEY
RALPH BOND
ANDREW BUCHANAN
DONALD CARTER
ALB. CAVALCANTI
WILLIAM COLDSTREAM
ARTHUR ELTON
MARY FIELD
ROBERT FLAHERTY
JOHN GRIERSON
MARION GRIERSON
STANLEY HAWES
J. B. HOLMES
HUMPHREY JENNINGS
STUART LEGG
LEN LYE
PAUL ROTHA
ALEX. SHAW
EVELYN SPICE
DONALD TAYLOR
JOHN TAYLOR
HARRY WATT
H. BRUCE WOOLFE
BASIL WRIGHT

★

Best wishes
for the
New Year
to readers of
World Film News
from the
Documentary Group

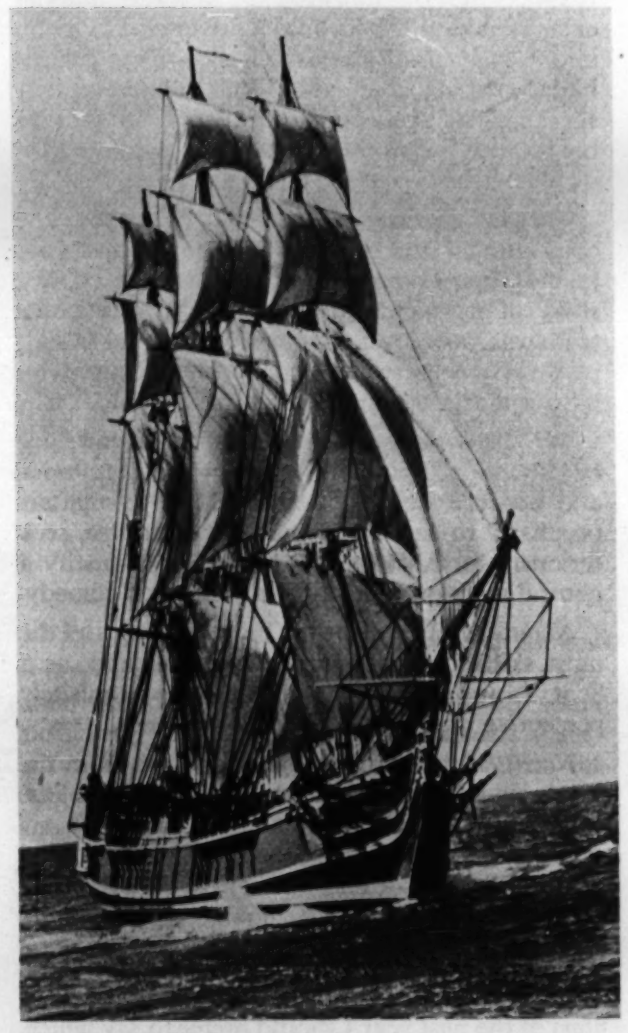
★

world FILM news
AND TELEVISION PROGRESS
(INCORPORATING CINEMA QUARTERLY)

VOL. I NO. 10 PRICE: ONE SHILLING JANUARY 1937

Best of the Year

A show of hands goes up for "Mutiny on the Bounty" "Louis Pasteur" "Mr. Deeds" and "Kermesse Héroïque" in the array of varied opinion



"Mutiny on the Bounty"

BERNARD SHAW

Of the seventy-eight films listed I can remember only three: *Romeo and Juliet*, *As You Like It*, and *La Kermesse Héroïque*. The last was by far the most intelligently and artistically handled.

As to Romeo, the conviction of the directors that they knew better than Shakespeare how to tell the story resulted in follies and stupidities that would have wrecked any ordinary play with an ordinary cast. Fortunately the play was foolproof, and the cast very strong.

As You Like It was badly cast, barring, of course, Mr. Leon Quartermaine's feat of making Jacques bearable and even delightful. It was also badly cut, proving that the play cannot do without Adam and Touchstone. But Elizabeth Bergner's dramatic imagination is so powerful, and her skill so perfect that the moment she dressed as a lad she became a lad. An unfeminine Rosalind is impossible: all the great Rosalinds have been ultra-feminine.

VAL GIELGUD

I would place my selection in the following order: *La Kermesse Héroïque*, *Mayerling*, *Libelled Lady*. The last only gets in by a short head, defeating *My Man Godfrey* only by virtue of a personal predilection for Miss Myrna Loy as opposed to Miss Carole Lombard, and *Top Hat* because, good though the latter was, I had experienced the formula before.

I doubt if there can be any question at all about *La Kermesse Héroïque*. For wit, acting, pictorial beauty, and neatness of story, it stands out a mile. It bears the hallmark of that real taste which is so seldom achieved in the cinema. It is, in brief, a work of art.

Mayerling is, I think, chiefly remarkable for the acting of the two principals. M. Boyer and Mlle. Darrieux, faced with a true story whose principal ingredients are those of a novelette, never lacked conviction for an instant. It is only necessary to think of what Hollywood would have done with *Mayerling* to realise how good *Mayerling* is as it stands.

Libelled Lady, on the other hand, shows just how good Hollywood can be when it finds itself with a range of subject and characterisation which it really understands. The technical brilliance of this picture, the terrific vitality of its star performances, the real brilliance of the dialogue, set this picture in the very front rank of entertainment, and as long as Hollywood aims at entertainment it is invincible. It is when Hollywood hears about Art with a Capital A, and begins dabbling in such dangerous pools as the classical works of Tolstoi and Shakespeare, that Hollywood comes so severely to grief—the more ostentatiously because it persists in spending so very much more money on its failures than any other country can on its successes.

CHARLES B. COCHRAN

Of the films I have seen this year I liked *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* most.

ROBERT DONAT

Quite accidentally I find that I missed most of the big commercial successes including even *Mutiny on the Bounty* so that my judgment is necessarily limited. Also, I presume I must exclude Korda films, although I would have liked to have said, that, in my opinion, both *Ghost Goes West* and *Rembrandt* took us considerably further than any similar films.

I am left with the following, all of which delighted me for different reasons:

Top Hat. Because of Astaire's rhythmic feet and Mark Sandrich's rhythmic footage.

Desire. Because of Lubitsch—to me four-fifths a perfect film.

Secret Agent. Because of Hitch, and I wished I had been in it.

Modern Times. Because of Charlie's inability to streamline his own ageless nonsense.

These Three. Because of Sam Goldwyn's courage. I sat with him in a Wardour Street projection theatre, where I previewed the film; he had come hot from a fight with the censor and the point which he had fought for and won was a very subtle one, and showed a side to the commercial Sam that I had never suspected.

La Kermesse Héroïque. Because of its complete perfection and because I still cannot believe I have the good fortune to be directed by Feyder and supervised by Korda all at once.

SYBIL THORNDIKE

The films I have most enjoyed are:

Rhodes of Africa because I think the story an amazing one and the acting living and sincere.

Night at the Opera because I think the Marx Brothers are "outsize comedians," and I would go anywhere to see them!

Mr. Deeds Goes to Town because it made me feel warmed and happy.

ANDREW BUCHANAN

The Great Ziegfeld was, I think, the greatest musical spectacle I ever saw; technically, it was practically flawless, and the rather slight biographical background most excellently handled.

Night Mail gave me the most exciting half-hour of the year, proving again the existence of real drama in the everyday world that is waiting to be observed and captured by creative people.

Tudor Rose was, I feel, the most dignified, restrained, and intelligent picture in historical cinema, lovely to look upon, and listen to, containing deft touches, and a perfect ending, that revealed Robert Stevenson's sensitive directorial ability. *Top Hat* appealed to me quite as much! I liked its slick tempo—its self assurance—its dialogue.

Things to Come I liked for its conception, and the execution thereof, despite the fact that this included the execution of the characters on the altar of art direction.

Louis Pasteur was surely one of the most serious efforts ever attempted in screen biography, and what a change to find adequate praise given to Science and Medicine instead of to the inevitable Warrior, and what a pity *Rembrandt* did not achieve as much for Art.

Mr. Deeds must be included as a vivid example of the greatness of simplicity, when handled with understanding and humour.

Nursery Island was equally big in a little way, proving that Features should be measured in terms of quality, and not reels.

Finally Hitchcock's *Sabotage*, which contains probably more originality than all the lot of them put together. May his genius for making unlikely events likely, and likely events unlikely, go on for ever.

JOHN GRIERSON

I did not see *Sabotage*, *The Informer*, *Ah, Wilderness*, *The Petrified Forest* or *Green Pastures*—all or any of which might have counted. The others I estimate as follows. The most moving was *Pasteur* and I wish I had made it. The most memorable was *Rembrandt*. The most important comedy was *Modern Times*, though I found *Desperado* and *Kermesse* the most amusing ones. The best piece of sheer movie was the mail-throwing sequence in *Night Mail*, cut by Watt. The best piece of screen journalism was the Father Divine item in *March of Time*, which was banned—out of jealousy, no doubt—by Lord Tyrrell. The most exciting film experiment was Len Lye's manipulation of colour changes in *Rainbow Dance*. The best piece of educational work was the ill-photographed, badly developed, out of sync., object lesson on soil erosion made under the Bantu Education Experiment. The most vital slab of propaganda was *The Nutrition Film*, made by Anstey for the Gas Light and Coke. The best minor film was *F Man*. The only classics I saw during the year were Jean Renoir's *La Chienne* (banned) and Jean Vigo's *L'Atalante*, both French and both now a couple of years old. Nothing else, I estimate, was in the same street of æsthetic as these two masterworks.

FORSYTH HARDY

It has been an unusually good year for films. From a dozen which have added something to cinema's stature I would select *Rembrandt*, *The Story of Louis Pasteur*, and *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, with, among the shorts, *Night Mail* and *Nutrition*.

In one sense *Rembrandt* must rank as the most ambitious and courageous film of the year. It ignored the box-office and the mass of convention by which everyday films make their appeal and set out to give the portrait of a man with the sincerity and integrity which, common in other mediums of expression, are seldom encountered in the cinema. Korda and Laughton and Zuckmayer (for cinema is a co-operative art) had something to say about Rembrandt and they said it with the frankness and freedom of a biographer, yet using skilfully their own medium of film.

Pasteur similarly was a breakaway from the conventional stuff of the movie, though it was not to the same extent ambitious in treatment. The story of a singlehanded struggle for scientific truth was moving and impressive and Paul Muni's performance as the stubborn little chemist both gave it authority and made it memorable.

Mr. Deeds I liked immensely, immoderately—because it had spirit, freshness and good humour and because Capra's theme related to matters peculiarly to-day's. I would not, of course, seek seriously for a sociological purpose to justify a natural reaction to a brilliantly handled comedy.

Night Mail I thought the most exciting and the most skilful documentary of the year and, as a Scot, I am specially grateful for the exquisitely perceptive crossing the Border sequence.

Nutrition, short in footage, stood out from the year's cinema for the size and scope of its subject.

MAX SCHACH

Rather than state which I consider the best films of the past year I should prefer to say which films made the most lasting impression on my memory.

Modern Times because Chaplin always finds new territory.

Mutiny on the Bounty for the incomparable way in which a sensational treatment has been transformed into a perfect artistic work by Charles Laughton, Clark Gable and Franchot Tone.

Top Hat, as a perfect example of a rhythmic, charming musical comedy—something that has so often been misinterpreted.

The Ghost Goes West, for its charm and production qualities and for showing us how a Hungarian producer can get away with a French director and English star to make a real Scotch story with such success.

JIMMY NERVO

Mutiny on the Bounty. Flawless acting, perfect in detail and so gripping I forgot I was watching a film.

My Man Godfrey. Such clever dialogue and so unique, most entertaining.

The Great Ziegfeld. Perhaps this should be a second as it was incomparable as a production film.

LEN LYE

Fury. To me was the immediate pictorial film manner of presenting story meat. Like *March of Time* sometimes presents its material. The only other film that had this 'immediate' element so strongly was *Mantrap*, the silent Clara Bow-Menjou film.

La Kermesse Héroïque. Smacking of wine spillings and Rimbaud turgidity it smelt fine and authentic.

Mutiny on the Bounty. The arrival at the South Seas was a swell film middle: though it was shiny M.G.M. postcard, it kept scale.

Louis Pasteur. The most morally satisfying, but the entertainment value of the others, plus their film efficiencies, win out.

OSCAR DEUTSCH

From the point of view of quality, I would select *Things to Come* and *Romeo and Juliet* as the best films of the year.

Films which resulted in the highest box office bookings during the year were: *First a Girl*, *Top Hat*, *Dark Angel*, *The Ghost Goes West*, *Littlest Rebel*, *Mutiny on the Bounty*, *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, *These Three*, *Swing Time*.

ALBERTO CAVALCANTI

1936 gave us, among many others, three great films—a biography, a drama and a comedy. *The Story of Louis Pasteur*, *Fury*, and *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*. They were made by outstanding directors and played by the three greatest cinema actors—Paul Muni, Spencer Tracy, and Gary Cooper.

Curiously enough, although very different in style, these three films have a strong point in common in that they deal with important social problems, and, if the last is somewhat lighter and more personal, it is nevertheless a brilliant satire of the American bourgeoisie.

It is interesting to note that ten years ago female stars such as Nazimova, Pickford, and Swanson were high above their male partners. Nowadays, things have changed, and the same difference of level exists the other way round.

Sensationalism, sex, and sentimentality are giving way to more substantial matters in film-subject.

EDITOR W.F.N.

Green Pastures. It rings true and gives an insight into the psychology of a race.

Bullets and Ballots. Moves fast and stimulates contemplation on methods of racketeering lawfully employed this side of Chicago.

Mayerling. Well produced and so ably directed that the slimness of the plot does not matter at all.

L'Atalante. From a direction point of view, the most imaginative film I have ever seen.

CAMERAMAN ON A MAGIC CARPET

In the old days a cameraman passed as a tourist, and policemen would stop on the street to see what makes the movies move! Now, all over the world, officials, politicians, militarists, business men, and even the general public think twice before they let the cameraman shoot.

CHARLES W. HERBERT, who has wandered the globe since the end of the War, certainly holds the movie-man's championship for covering ground. He is now in China making items for *March of Time*. His passport probably contains the following facts: blue eyes, fair hair, weight 120 lbs., age 40.

Herbert started off as a free-lance getting acquainted with America. Later he joined Fox on a roving commission to shoot items for their Magic Carpet of Movietone. This job took him to practically every country in the world. Herbert had no personal credit on the opening titles of the films he shot and in fact saw his own work only by chance on his travels as the negative was sent to New York for developing and the films were cut and edited there. All he saw of his work at the time was the short pieces of negative he developed *en route* for exposure tests. To those who knew Herbert's work there could never be any question of the origin of his items, for the startling photography and courageous use of filters always marked his stuff indelibly. On the Magic Carpet job he won for himself the highest place among camera technicians for exterior work.

Lucille Herbert, his wife, always travelled with him. Her job was to make contacts, obtain permits and facilities and do the research work necessary for scripting and commentary. On reaching a country they would travel around with their small van which in a tiny space accommodated cameras, lights and sound equipment.

All this was high pressure work. It was complicated by lack of experienced assistance, for a sound man did not always travel with them, and Herbert had to cope with the whole job and more often than not, the physical labour of unloading and carrying the camera and motor from location to location. This, in the end, was responsible for dislocating a shoulder for Herbert is of extremely slight build, and the average newsreel-type camera and motor weighs over a hundredweight. The greatest of all complications was the difficulty over customs and permits. Of this he says:

"Years before the enactment of regulations, the roving cameraman wandered at will here and there about the globe, always getting concessions and permissions that an insurance man or a shoe salesman would not dream of requesting. In those days a cameraman carried all of his equipment slung over his shoulders on long straps, and walked off a boat or train like any ordinary passenger. He usually passed as a tourist. Even when the inspectors recognised him as a cameraman, they smiled a little and ventured a few questions about Hollywood, to which the versatile newsreel man always had a pleasing answer. Police stopped on the street to take a peek through the camera, to see what makes the movies move. Armies stood at attention and charged proudly just to show the world what they could do. Industries opened up their doors—local society leaders and the man on the street turned out as extras for the mere thrill of being before a camera.

From a Fox Magic Carpet Item

"Now, militarists draw a cloak of secrecy about them lest the eye of the camera give away some guarded information or show up some inefficiency which they want to keep for themselves. Industry managers ponder and put off decision until the next Board of Directors meeting. Home town folk stop to wonder if it will be proper. Hunted men duck and hide as the sweeping eye of the camera comes into the lumber camp, factory, mine or ship where they are working. Politicians hesitate to appear in scenes that might be used by their opponents to kindle opposition. Churches hesitate—with some of the leaders for and some against invading the sanctity of the church with a movie camera.

"Now a cameraman with a truck and complete sound equipment makes a rather startling sight to the Customs Inspector that spots him from the horde of tourists that daily arrive by steamer and train. There he stops and his troubles begin. He has to try every means to enter a country and get a workable permit.

"Strict regulations laid down by various countries are made as a result of offended national feeling caused by the work of the free-lance newsmen and misinformation obtained in the field from none too seriously patriotic citizens. The difference in the views held by various nationals as to what is detrimental has also caused the cameraman grief.

"What one country regards as a national insult, another merely considers as an unusual and interesting fact. To make a picture of an Italian eating spaghetti is almost a criminal offence in Italy."

When working on the Magic Carpet series Herbert thought he was handling a tough job and after several years away from America was beginning to think regretfully of his log cabin in the Rockies. Finally the Magic Carpet folded up and the Herberts got around to visiting the log cabin. But it was not long before Herbert started looking for real punishment, so when *March of Time* came along he agreed to do location work for them.

From China he writes:

"Truly this has been my toughest assignment—for several reasons. We were the first to come in under the most recent ruling

REVISED REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO THE MAKING OF MOTION PICTURES IN CHINA BY FOREIGNERS.

They were passed in April and we arrived in June. Believe you me they are tight and everybody is united in the one determination of not allowing bad pictures to be made about China. They do prevent this but they do not make provision for the making of good pictures. It took me a month to get a workable permit and the only way I could get it was to make a personal appeal to the Generalissimo himself and show him some sample *March of Times* and outline my plans for China. He and Madame agreed wholeheartedly and gave instructions to their closest assistant to help us to work. But soon afterwards they took themselves away to the mountains to escape the heat and when the other officials who had been blocking the way found that they still had a clear track they still did all they could to block me and believe me it's been tough to get anything. We did manage to knock out a very complete record of Shanghai as the Fifth Largest City in the world and a number of other minor subjects.

"Another thing which retarded us was the fact that the President of the Central Party was shot by a photographer as soon as the latter had taken his picture. Next the Japanese tension. Next the spy mania which China has now cultivated and made to flourish in the minds of all those who have a stick in their hands. Next, at the time that Kawagoe, the Japanese Ambassador, visited Chang Kai Shek, six photographers disguised as diplomats crashed the gate behind him and even went into the Generalissimo's house and snapped right and left. That brought about an iron-clad ruling that barred any foreigner from an official gathering.

"All these difficulties were capped by an attack of the worst kind of Chinese dysentery which I hope to recover from in Hawaii where some shooting is scheduled. There we can both have some of the much-needed rest which we have never had time to take since we started to be the Herberts who wander here and there making movies and leading an interesting life—so say all we meet."

In addition to the Magic Carpet items on London, English rural life and Ireland, all of which were remarkable for their extraordinarily fine photography, Herbert has made *Mediterranean Memories*, *The Square Rigger*, *Desert Patrol* and *Saharianos in Tripolitania*—among many others.

M.A.T.

Meetings and Acquaintances

ESLANDA GOODE ROBESON, known as Essie to her friends, is making her debut as a professional actress in her husband, Paul Robeson's, new picture, *Big Fella*, a British Lion film. She plays the part of a coloured café keeper. Her next part is the Arab chief's wife in the film Paul will make after his month's concert tour in the Soviet Union. They will go on location to Cairo for three weeks.

Born in Washington, D.C., Essie was an analytical chemist before she married. She gave up chemistry, and for several years concentrated on managing the business side of her husband's career. When they settled in England, she became interested in Africa, and has been a student of anthropology at London University under Malinovski for some years. Last summer she went to South and Central Africa where she took a unique series of photographs. Her nine-year-old boy, Pauli, went along with her, and they motored several thousand miles through the country, living much of the time in African villages. She is the author of *Paul Robeson, Negro*, which was published in England some years ago.

Has decided views on education, is always perfectly dressed, and is a marvellous cook; her vegetables once eaten are never forgotten.

Recently there were great preparations at Denham. The Duchess of Kent was going to look over Korda's studio. Everyone waited expectedly—a vast car slid up to the main entrance—everyone dashed forward to open the door—two young women stepped out. Which was the Duchess? In unison they said, "Miss Holloway, please." They were just another couple of would-be stars!

DOROTHY HOLLOWAY, assistant casting director to London Films, has to cope with the film-struck youth, middle-age and old age of Britain. The strangest letters arrive by every post, the most pathetic and comic interviews take place in her office; and always she is the incarnation of tact. At the age of eighteen she began her career as a municipal clerk at Bexhill. Then she became in turn accountant to the technical journal, *Twentieth Century Advertising*, secretary to Brendon Bracken of *English Life;* and circulation manager of *Advertising World.*

Twelve years ago "Holly" was lured into the film world. She became secretary to Harold Lipson, and stayed with him for five years. Then she went to Paramount British Productions as secretary to the casting director; passed over to London Film Productions in the same capacity; later becoming assistant casting director. She has also done free lance journalism, and is part author of Paul Robeson's recent film, *Song of Freedom.* She has several other scripts on hand.

Ambition—to tour the world; in the meantime her hobbies are photography ("I'm an awful amateur," she says), gardening and Chinese porcelain.

DENIS MYERS, has just returned from a holiday in Algiers to his labours in Fleet Street, congratulating himself on missing night work on the Constitutional crisis. His interviews for *World Film News* will be resumed next month.

Meet **AL LEWIN.** For twelve years intimately associated with the late Thalberg, he is in Europe taking a four-month vacation before going over to Paramount. Al Lewin, five feet of genial benignity, looking more like the American counterpart of Strube's little man than a Hollywood big shot, supervised the production of *Mutiny on the Bounty*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and the forthcoming *Good Earth*, Thalberg's last picture. He says that *Good Earth*, which took 2½ years to make, was a vast effort to show agricultural China with absolute honesty. He believes that public taste has outgrown the "boy meets girl" theme.

IAN DALRYMPLE, Scenarist-in-chief to Victor Saville Productions. Born in South Africa and educated at Rugby and Trinity College, Cambridge, he is fast proving that the Public School and the 'Varsity provides a starting-ground for a successful film career comparable to the best news-vendor's stance. For some years supervising Editor to Gaumont-British and Gainsborough, he turned to free-lance writing and joined Victor Saville early in 1936. Has made the film adaptation of *Storm in a Teacup* and assisted in its production as co-director.

Believes films will never become an Art if only for the reason that no really creative artist would choose film as his medium for self expression.

MAURICE JAUBERT (see *W.F.N.* July issue), at present in London working on soundscore for Cavalcanti's *We Live in Two Worlds*—a film of Switzerland. Jaubert, young, energetic, and a typical Southerner, regards music for films as separate art, demands simplicity, has no inhibitions about different instruments for recording. Was recently seen at Simpson's in the Strand fierily denouncing present-day Sibelius cult to protesting J. B. Priestley. Jaubert is a fast worker, supports the Front Populaire, has boundless admiration for Milhaud, Ibert, Honegger. His wife sings his compositions superbly and looks lovely at the same time.

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Cover Still . . . Margo in *Winterset*

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WORLD FILM NEWS: EDITOR, MARION A. GRIERSON; BUSINESS MANAGER, STUART LEGG.

EDITORIAL REFERENCES

FILM COMMISSION: Proposed by Moyne Committee that Government appoint body of two or four men to watch operation of the new Quota Act, and make proposals for promoting quality and interests of Brtish films.

BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE: A Company Limited by Guarantee, with no share capital but assisted by government grant, formed to encourage use and development of the cinematograph as a means of entertainment and instruction.

THE TRAVEL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION: A non-trading organisation formed with government support whose purpose is to spread throughout the world knowledge of the products and industries as well as the amenities and attractions of the British Isles.

FILM COUNCIL: A research unit set up by *World Film News* to investigate and report on the financial and political background of the film industry.

IMPERIAL INSTITUTE: An institution to promote the educational and informative contacts of the British Empire, and to circulate Empire Films to racial and educational organisations in the United Kingdom.

FEDERATION OF BRITISH FILM SOCIETIES: Formed to advise, co-ordinate and encourage the formation and work of societies, and to facilitate the booking of films.

THE BRITISH COUNCIL: Formed by government support to make better known in foreign countries the cultural side of British life: its language, art, music and literature.

EDITORIAL

A Necessary Reform

WE HAVE RECEIVED an invitation from a Governor of the Film Institute to outline a scheme of reform. We are grateful for this compliment to our disinterestedness, and there is no question that if the B.F.I. is to be reformed, the plan must come from without. Its present constitution does not provide the conditions for a clear and progressive policy.

We are asked to make specific and constructive proposals. The pleasure is ours. First of all, we invite the governing body to reconsider its position. By reason of its own heterogeneous nature, it has failed completely in the direction of policy; and its wisest gift to the Institute would be to resign. Its last act should be to invite the Government to nominate four men, with records of disinterested public service, to govern the Institute for a period of two years. From their experience during that time they will no doubt be able to advise the Privy Council as to the best method of manning the Governing Board in future.

The reasons for this drastic but necessary step are known to all observers and friends of the educational and cultural cinema. Individually able the present governors may be in their own spheres, but in the paramount matter of co-ordinating educational and cultural film interests they have been an irritant and a hindrance, not a help. It is a common comment on the Institute that it moves into action with three millstones round its neck—the sectional interests of exhibitors, producers and educators. They are only sectional because their representatives have not been able to take the larger point of view which is vital in a co-ordinating body of this sort. Certain of the governorships, moreover, would seem to be life-time appointments. These personal holdings are a progressive danger, disturbing as they do the authority of the manager and imposing an undue influence on the Institute's decisions.

It should be a condition of any continued support from the Privy Council that the new governing body carries with it real public confidence. If the Institute is to be the important national body it set out to be, the highest representatives of the public interest are not too high for its council board. The Moyne Committee has proposed a Film Commission of four men to look after the progress of the film industry. They are to have no professional or financial interest in the affairs on which they sit. We propose a similar policy for the Film Institute. There is no reason why it should not be decided later on to make it a sub-section of the Film Commission itself.

One major error of the Film Institute in the past has been its tendency to claim sovereignty over any and every activity which, it thought would look well on its annual report. It has announced half a hundred national and international functions when it had neither the finance nor the organisation for more than a few. We propose the Film Institute concentrate on the one job it can do best—the service of the children and the development of the film in education. Let it leave the two Federations of Film Societies to look after the interests of the cultural films. They are spontaneous groups. Less inhibited by the extraneous interests of commerce, education and mere moralism, they are better equipped to look after the interests of art.

Similarly, the interests of Empire information are better left to the Imperial Institute. Here again is a spontaneous growth and an instrument admirably fitted by experience and contacts for the purpose in hand. It is a solid basis for the interchange of Empire Films and the guidance of Empire Governments and it would be waste of public money and public time for the Film Institute to overlap its activities.

In the matter of contacts with foreign countries, there is again a body more fitted to perform the very important function of getting our films shown abroad. This is the British Council which, in co-operation with the Travel and Industrial Association, is doing practical and useful work under the efficient chairmanship of Mr. Guedalla.

As for the health of the commercial cinema the Film Institute will be wise to leave that to the Trade: under the guidance, if necessary, of the proposed Film Commission. Its incursions into Trade matters during the last three years have been, to say the least, unfortunate. Ill-informed criticisms and gratuitous postures of superiority have created unnecessary oppositions. To an industry which has shown many signs recently (in Shakespeare and Dickens films, in *Pasteurs*, etc.) of improving its qualities, moralising strictures can seem desperately unreal.

Our constructive proposals are therefore very simple. Leave the Empire field to the Imperial Institute, the foreign field to the British Council, the æsthetic field to the Federations of Film Societies. Concentrate on the children and the development of the educational field, and help in every way to promote among the public interest in the more ambitious efforts in cinema which are now coming from the producers. Above all see to it that the Institute starts a fresh page in the matter of governorship.

This plan which we propose concentrates the various fields in the right and proper hands. It would make for better work and in a very short time for a better understanding. The organised alliance which must finally result between the Imperial Institute, the British (Educational) Film Institute, the British Council and the Federations of Film Societies would be a more real and living structure than the present catch-as-catch-can collection of panels into which the Film Institute has so unfortunately sunk.

World Film News wishes its Readers A Happy and Prosperous New Year

Discipline— The Price of Progress

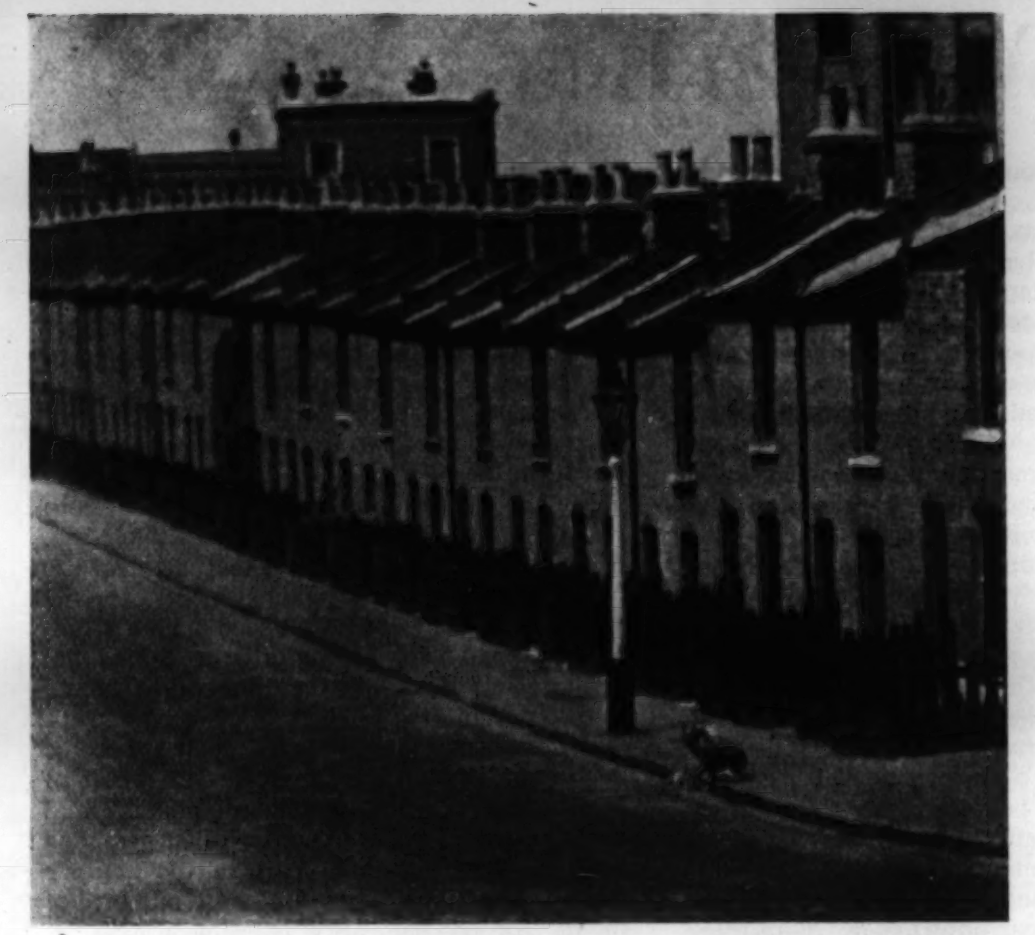
THE STARTLING REPORT on British film finance published on another page should add weight to the Moyne Committee's proposal for a *Film Commission*. The suggestion is that a Government appointed body of two to four men should keep watch on the operations of the new Quota Act and make such proposals as will promote both the quality and the interest of the British cinema. A condition of appointment is that members are to have no financial entanglements in the Industry. It is suggested that such a Film Commission might help to bring order to British film finance and represent the film world before Parliament and the public.

We welcome the proposal. It has become necessary to order and progress. Our report of film finance describes a state of anarchy and chaos. Lunatics vie with imbeciles in gambling away a very substantial part of the nation's money. The noble opportunity of millions of money for creative work is being wasted by adventurers and con men. Extravagance in studio production, insane competition in theatre building and a speculative boom in the creation of studio space are other disorderly elements in a disgraceful demonstration. The lunatic fringe in the British film industry is more than a fringe and unless it is surgically dealt with it may bring to ruin our hopes of a great British cinema. The Americans, who best know the symptoms are indeed openly laughing at us—and waiting for the crash.

The Moyne proposal has frightened the Trade. There is already a cry to save our freedom and whatnot, especially whatnot. But the freedom of anarchy which we now doubtfully enjoy is not worth defending. It loads our creative work with impossible overheads and puts the creative mind in the grip of any smooth-tongued rogue who can wheedle money from the City. It puts a premium on financial manipulation and makes a side issue of what should be our major concern—the quality of our films and the articulation of our national life. It brings under a single cloud of disrepute the adventurous and the adventurer. The Film Commission would bring that order out of disorder which we have failed to create ourselves.

Why should the Film Trade complain? The Film Commission would at last provide them with a national front and give them an entry into the national counsels. Many men in the Trade are anxious to demonstrate their sense of public responsibility and nothing was more impressive in the recent conference on children's films than the high calibre of the film representatives. Here is their opportunity to improve the standing of the industry, give it a much needed discipline, encourage its best elements and ensure its development in the national interest.

For our glossary of organisations mentioned on this page, please refer to cols. 2 and 3, page 6.



People's Pictures and People's Palaces

CENTRE OF London's sea-going trade, its liveliest, busiest, and friendliest area, the East End offers an unusual angle to an investigation of the cinema's effects upon the lives of working people. Here are dockers and clerks, transport workers and warehousemen, shop-assistants, and salesmen, shop-keepers, and street-traders. Here Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant, Indian seamen and Chinese rub shoulders in these dingy nineteenth century streets. How does the cinema, the twentieth century, affect the lives of the people living and working in this overcrowded, drear district of London?

Thirty or forty years ago, the only entertainment accessible to the people of East London was in the public-house or the music-hall, both for adults and both mainly frequented by men. For young people there was no escape from the indescribable social conditions of those days; the foul slums and over-crowded tenements; the long hours and low wages; the hopeless ignorance and crime raised by such conditions.

Religious bodies labouring against the spiritual inertia created by squalor and misery, brought music to aid their efforts, music mainly rendered by brass or silver bands, a form of entertainment which still holds a place in the affections of the older people in East London.

Much has been changed since forty years ago, when the revelations of Charles Booth and others shocked the world. There are still slums, there is still overcrowding, wages in many cases are still too low and hours too long. But many improvements have been secured and the long efforts of winning these has made this section of London's people a conscious, educated, and civic-minded community.

All this can be seen to-day in all the many phases of East End life and leisure, in the better dress of the people, in the many social activities, in the network of municipal enterprises and in the social and educational centres crowded with young people.

In the world of entertainment, the cinema now plays the all-important part, though less in the case of the older than the younger people. The middle-aged and elderly men continue to find their main relaxation in pigeon-clubs, in darts, matches and championships, in their working men's clubs, their Trade Unions and political organisations and more recently in radio construction and listening. But women and young people depend nowadays almost entirely for their entertainment upon the cinema.

Music-halls have vanished. In the area I visited, there were fourteen cinemas, but no music-halls or theatres. The mission-halls stand there still: gaunt and cheerless as the drab streets in which they are built, bearing witness to the part they once played in the social life of the district and to the evangelising spirit of the nineteenth century, as well as to its architectural poverty. To-day these missions find it more and more difficult to attract young people, unless they are prepared to include, in their scheme of things, the cinema—the new factor in the leisure hour of youth.

I visited one mission. This mission had battled for years for its version of the good life. It found its hold beginning to slip. An enterprising minister began to use films as part of the mission's work and at once its fallen fortunes were restored.

The mission runs three shows a week. A Saturday afternoon show for children, admission one penny. The programmes for the children's shows consists mainly of Westerns and comedies, the children disliking dramas and love-stories. On Saturday evenings there is a performance for adults, admission prices being threepence and sixpence. For Saturday night audiences prefer action pictures, Westerns being popular with the grown-ups too. Educational and travel pictures have been tried but it was found that the audiences did not care very much for them.

On Saturday evenings the mission runs a second religious service at which a film is shown The secretary of the mission explained the difficulty of getting the right kind of film for these services.

"Religious bodies are making films," he said, "but they are only just beginning and the films are hardly good enough yet. Films made by commercial companies, however excellent they may be as entertainment, are not usually suited to the Sunday evening service."

Actually, a glance over the bookings for the last year shows that the mission depends almost entirely upon entertainment films made by commercial companies. The list included such films as *British Agent*, *Temptation*, *Stranger in Town*, *My Heart is Calling*, *Dinkie*, *The Blue Street*, and *Reunion*. Non-fiction films are, apparently, not liked by this audience either, though one, *Cavalcade of the Movies* was very well received.

From the mission, I went round the various cinemas in the immediate neighbourhood. All, save one, were either built many years ago, as cinemas, or converted music-halls and quite unsuited for the growing cinema audience and for proper screening and sound transmission. New cinemas are badly needed here.

The New People's Palace, Mile End Road

EAST LONDON:

Storm Centre of London Politics; melee of Races, Religions, Industries and Trades; half-a-million people packed around London's Dock-side:—

Investigation reveals action pictures and musicals to be most popular.

by RICHARD CARR

"East End audiences," said one manager to me, "are very critical indeed. They like good pictures, good American pictures, pictures of movement and action. They won't stand British pictures here at any price. When we have one in the programme, many of our patrons come in late or early to avoid seeing the British picture. Any good adventure, or gangster film will pack the house, though often a poor British film as second feature will affect the takings considerably.

"Comedies? Yes, they like comedies. The Marx Brothers are well received here but some of the older comedians such as Harold Lloyd are nowadays not such a draw.

"About fifty per cent. of our audience is Jewish, but I find very little difference in taste between the young Jewish people and others.

"How do I know what they like and what they don't? I have a job not to know. If the regular patrons don't like a film they make a point of telling me afterwards. They say 'B——y awful film that,' or some such remark.

"Or else they clap their hands during the film, or shuffle their feet and whistle. They certainly let me know whether or not they like the films we show."

Manager number two had an even healthier respect for his customers.

"Audiences down here are better judges of films than in any district I have yet worked in. They know what they like and they are certainly not backward in telling us when a picture is good or bad. They like pictures with fast, good dialogue, strong acting and plenty of movement. Costume pictures are not popular, and very few of my patrons have a good word to say for British films. British pictures are disliked because the acting is wooden, because the actors and actresses talk 'society fashion,' and because they are too slow.

"Often our patrons come in late rather than see a picture they have heard is not up to standard." Another cinema I visited was small but smartly lit outside, at which only one feature film is shown together with shorts to make up a two-hour programme. No newsreel is shown. A good idea, this, and one that seems to be popular. The cinema is open from twelve to twelve and admission is fourpence to any seat in the theatre, in the afternoon, and sixpence to any seat, in the evening. People come here to see films they missed when generally released or to see again films they particularly enjoyed. One British film that did good business here was *Jew Süss* mainly because of its Jewish interest. In fact, it seems that any film with Jewish interest will draw large crowds to this cinema, for a recent revival of the eight year old *Jazz Singer* drew record crowds.

Shorts of the serious kind are not popular here either. Travel films have been clapped off. The favourites are Laurel and Hardy and Popeye the Sailorman.

Then to East London's one and only super-cinema, a modern building contrasting strikingly with the dingy streets around. The comparison between its luxurious comfort and spaciousness and the housing conditions in surrounding streets appears to make the audience less critical of the films shown. In fact, it would probably be true to say that many of the very poor womenfolk come to this cinema in the afternoon as much for the warmth and comfort and the escape from crowded homes as for the films shown. Stage shows also attract audiences whatever the pictures may be, so I got less information on East End film preferences here than at any cinema I visited.

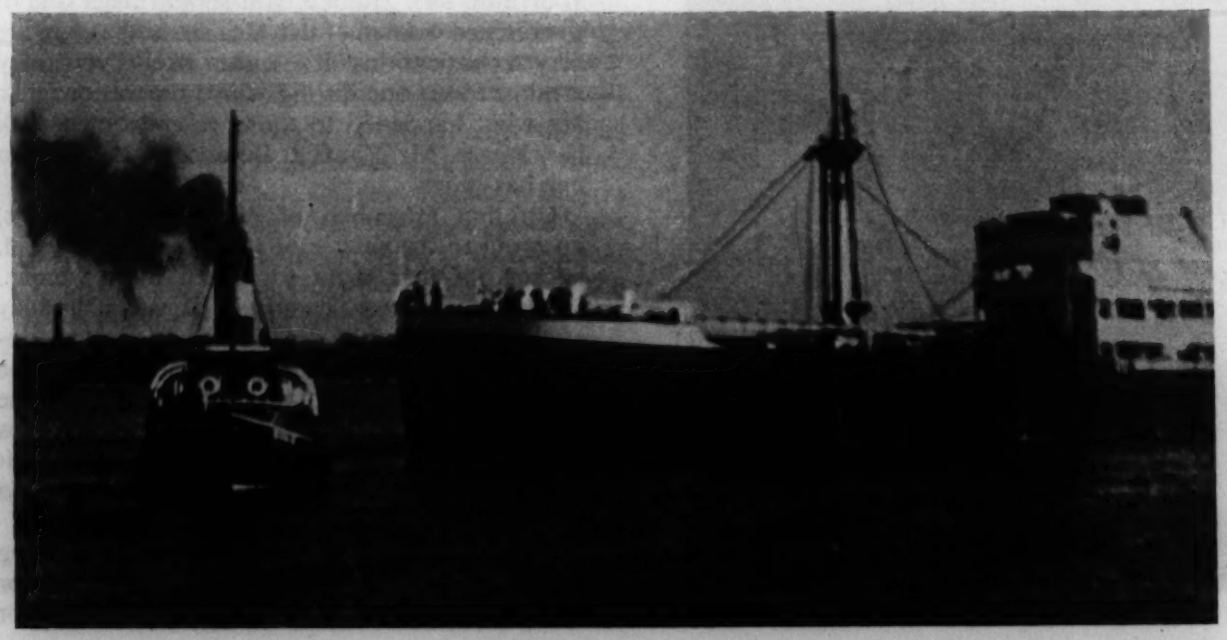
The best days for business are Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Friday is not in this district a good day for cinemas, possibly because Saturday is the Jewish holiday.

From the cinema managers, attendants, and ushers, from ordinary people talked to, I got some idea of the films that East London audiences enjoyed most during the last year. *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, *Follow the Fleet*, *Top Hat*, *These Three*, *Fury*, *The Broadway Melody of* 1936, and, above all, *Mutiny on the Bounty*. Good action pictures and good musicals seem to top the list in every cinema I visited.

It is difficult to assess the difference, if any, between Jewish and English tastes; most cinema managers seem to think that there was no difference at all, unless as was suggested, Jewish people are slightly more sophisticated.

My last call was at the People's Palace, once the great show and cultural centre of the East End. Closed down many years ago it is now about to re-open under very different conditions and significantly enough, proposes to include in its extensive programmes of lectures, plays, orchestral and band concerts, showings of educational films. Whether it will find a support for this type of film is difficult to say, but the experiment is being tried and it may well have some influence on the tastes of East End audiences.

In the meantime, the younger people will go on supporting the best entertainment films that the industry can give them.



(Pictures by Courtesy of the G.P.O. Film Unit)

The Siege of the Alcazar

Twentieth-Century Fox have scheduled for production, 'The Siege of the Alcazar,' based on an incident in the Spanish Civil War. In an open letter, Ivor Montagu draws the attention of Producer Darryl F. Zanuck to dangers of one-sided treatment.

DEAR MR. ZANUCK,

You are one of the most enterprising of the producers in the States to-day, and so I am not at all surprised to read that you are preparing for immediate production a film on the siege of the Alcazar. Its heroism has thrilled the world, you are reported as saying.

I also read that you are asking newspapermen and others who have been on the spot to collect you facts and photographs. You want it to be as authentic as possible.

Very conscientious. Just what I would expect of a man of your enterprise, and it is because I think this desire for authenticity so laudable, I am hastening to help you.

You see, I happen to have seen and spoken with quite a number of persons who were there, and I feel sure that there are a whole number of things about the siege that a man of your conscience would like to know about. It would be a pity if they got missed out.

First of all, you are quite right about the siege itself being unprecedented. I don't think there's ever been anything quite like it in history before. And it was very heroic. But I wonder if you've heard who the heroes were.

A hero, I believe, is a man who fights against odds. It would be right to use the word hero for the people, the ordinary men-in-the-street, who, with empty hands and in the first flush of their surprise and indignation, overcame the generals and their machine-guns in Madrid and Barcelona. Bare-handed they overcame them, the oath-breakers, in their barracks.

But in Toledo, the generals and their cadets had no ordinary barracks. They had a fortification that had withstood the armies of centuries, and held stores and arms for all the province. Few men they had, but for every man was more than one machine-gun.

If they were so armed, why did they run into their fortress? Liberators, national patriots, surely with such an abundance of stores, they could have armed the populace that welcomed them and marched victoriously forward.

Curiously enough, the population didn't welcome them, however, and for all their arms, for all their military training, they feared beyond their walls to meet the fate that met their foresworn colleagues in Barcelona and Madrid. Not one echo of sympathy did they meet among the good folk of Toledo, whom as one man, set about the investment of their citadel.

The cadets were few, their besiegers many, fit material for an heroic tale. You guessed it! The tale of traitors, armed to the teeth and with ample stores, cowering behind walls fourteen feet thick, While the man-in-the-street, a peaceable bloke like you and me, took off his coat and, in shirt sleeves and armed with a fowling piece, set about their punishment.

Just think of it! Walls fourteen feet thick with machine-guns through every loophole and on the other side, shot-guns and blunderbusses taken from old trophies off the walls. I can find you plenty of eye-witnesses. One old artilleryman, an English veteran of the Great War, when the besiegers after the first months or so managed to get hold of an old few-pounder, wept to see it fire. A bang, a puff of smoke high on the castle wall, and as the puff clears away a brown smudge on the unruffled brickwork. That would be a nice shot for your picture, Mr. Zanuck, only I'm afraid the critics might think it just a fake, they wouldn't think it was really war. I can find you plenty of people who saw it, however. Why it was, and how it was, that an unarmed people was denied the possibility of arming to defend itself against a rebel army, I don't suppose anybody can tell you, and anyway it won't come in your picture probably.

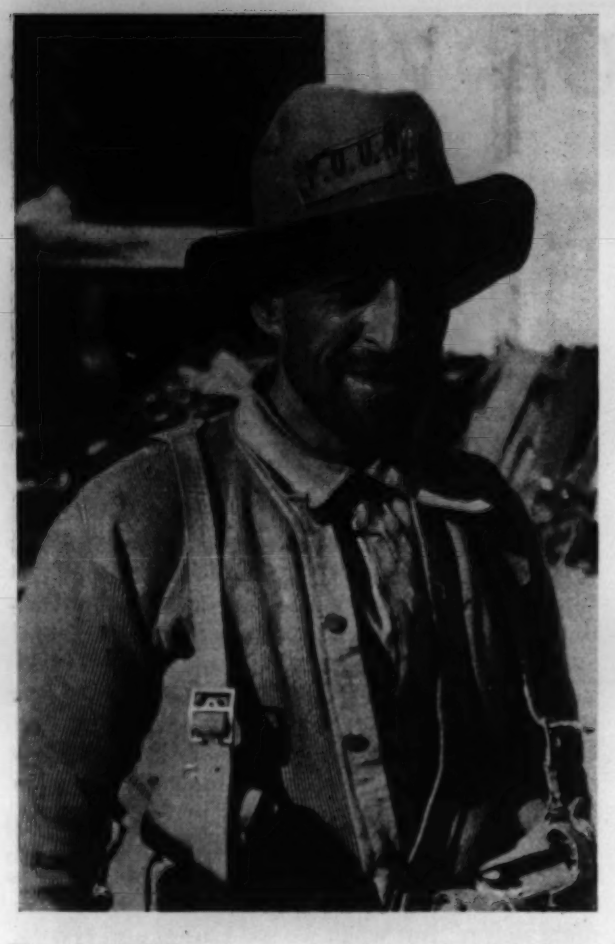
Now what do soldiers who are going to be cut off for a long time want with them? Think, Mr. Zanuck. Not ammunition, they had plenty. Not food, when they prepared they had also seen to that. Something else, Mr. Zanuck. They took their womenfolk, some of them—we have heard a great deal of the women and children of the Alcazar—*but it was not only their own womenfolk they took*.

If by any chance when you are getting ready your film, Mr. Zanuck, you should meet one of the rescued women of the Alcazar, and as you are very conscientious it's quite likely you may arrange to see one during your preparations, ask her what happened to those *other* women. Ask her. Please, Mr. Zanuck. Because to this day no one has heard.

On that afternoon of rebellion, the cadets, hurrying to the shelter of the citadel of the Cid, paused in their flight to snatch these women. Shall we call them 'hostages'? It was a holiday afternoon, and in the sunshine couples sat spooning. Others strolled along the lanes that ran by the hill on which the fortress stands. Sometimes the boy was knocked senseless. Sometimes, perhaps because he did something idly (shall we call it heroic, Mr. Zanuck?) he would be shot or stabbed with the bayonet.

A car, in which a boy and girl had been driving near the fatal place that day, lay in the street for weeks throughout the siege. The boy's body for

At the Front (*Photos—Catalan Government*)



Type of Militiaman **(Photo: Catalan Govt.)**

days slumped over the wheel. Then the besiegers went out and got it under a hail of machine-gun fire.

That might make another good shot. And as a scenarist myself, I don't think it makes a bad set-up in general. There they are, the fathers and the brothers, who till now have spent their lives behind their desks and counters. Some have guns, perhaps, and others—yes, I can find you people who have seen it—have only sticks, but all of them, hatred in their hearts, crouch peering from chairs and tables piled in the street, at those walls of fourteen feet of stone and brick that hide from them those whom perhaps they fear ever to see again. Will you come into their headquarters, a chemist's shop round the corner, and see the militia officer (terrible name, isn't it, almost Red, but he was the chemist himself before the patriot heroes took him from his filling of prescriptions). There on the wall behind his head, you will see the portraits of girls, last available family photographs on outings and the like, with beneath them a description and the circumstances of their capture. "Try to look out for those and save them when the citadel falls," is the legend on the wall.

Eye-witnesses? Well, you won't learn all that happened behind those walls and I don't think you need worry. Mr. Quigley wouldn't let you show it if you did find out. But you've always got your happy ending. Not perhaps the conventional happy ending, which is no doubt what makes the subject appeal to so daring and innovating a mind as yours. I suppose the usual film ending would show merit rewarded and injured virtue recovered, but as all the world knows, it hasn't worked out like that. Not yet at least. When those cowering heroes saw their bastions falling, when even those giant walls crumbled beneath simple miner's dynamite and the bare hands of the wronged populace, when these heroes at last felt vengeance at their throats, then these who in all Spain could find no Spaniard to lift a hand for them were rescued by mercenaries, by Moors, by the riffraff of the Foreign Legion, by Nazis fresh from the massacres of June 30th, and Italians fresh from their mustard gas victory over the Red Cross. But this isn't a happy ending at all, you may protest. Oh yes, it is. The thoughtless girls of that holiday afternoon may, it is true, be missing when you're seeking for the facts. *But their families do not mourn them now.* Why? Ask your own newspaper. Ask Jay Allen. Ask those who stepped gingerly in the streets of Toledo lest their nice American shoes were soiled with blood. Ask those who saw the Moors celebrate the release of their Alcazar 'heroes' by tossing hand grenades up and down the hospital wards before they set the hospital afire.

You must have that in. No one will be sad in the audience, when they know there's no one left now to worry about the sad things in the picture, will they?

So you see what a fine picture you can make. I congratulate you once again on deciding to make it authentic. Not many film producers would have the courage.

By the way, if by any chance report should be mistaken, and you are thinking of telling not a true story, but a fairy version of this tale—then Mr. Zanuck, let me whisper just this little warning in your ear: there are men and women and children in every corner of the world, Mr. Zanuck, who will remember it, Mr. Zanuck, as long as they remember the real heroes of the Alcazar.

And one day, Mr. Zanuck, you might come to regret it yourself.

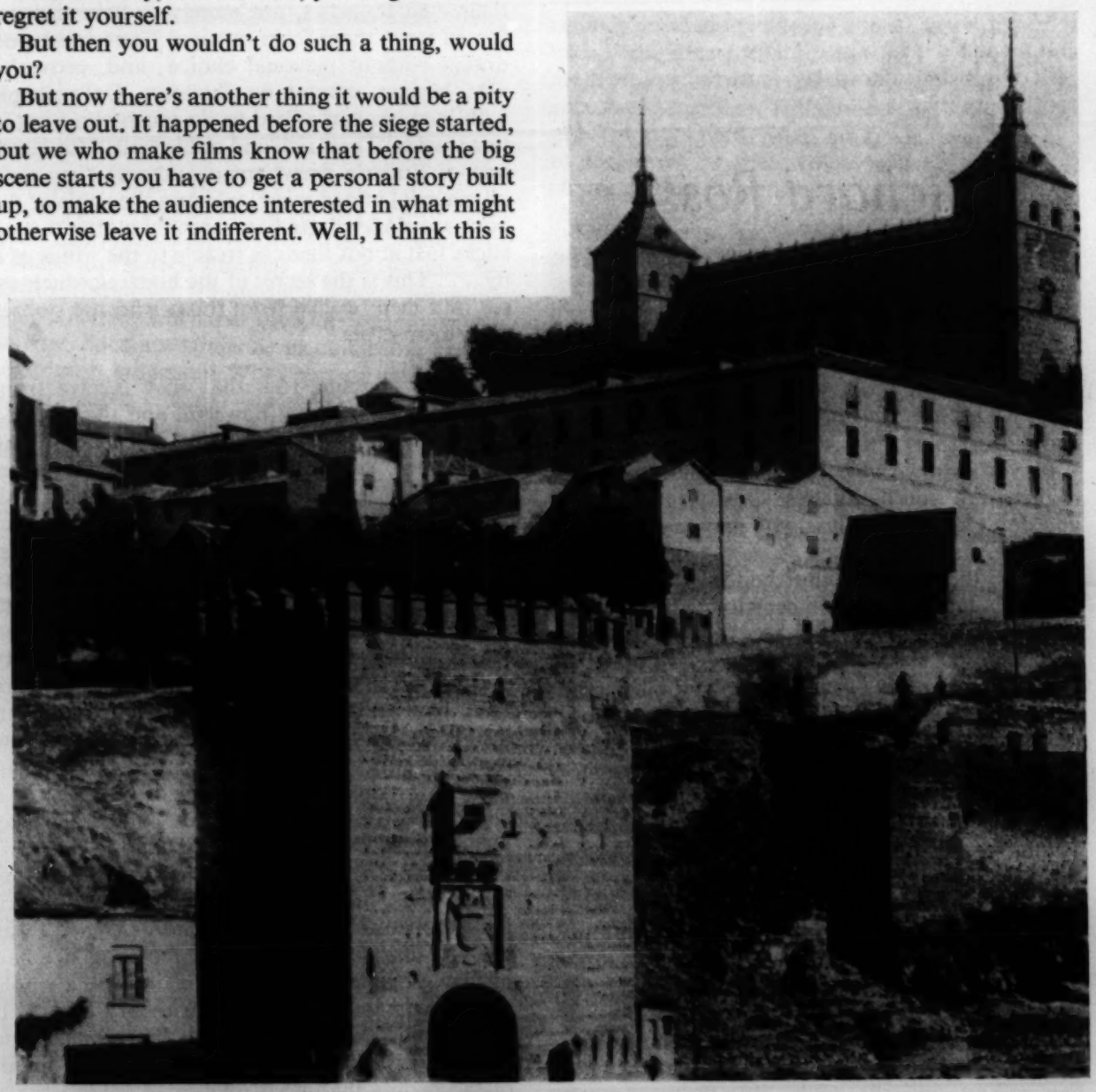
But then you wouldn't do such a thing, would you?

But now there's another thing it would be a pity to leave out. It happened before the siege started, but we who make films know that before the big scene starts you have to get a personal story built up, to make the audience interested in what might otherwise leave it indifferent. Well, I think this is just the personal bit you need. It gives us the motive, too. It explains why the good burghers of Toledo, the clerks and the shopkeepers and the handicraftmen took off their coats and picked up their shotguns with such a will. It wasn't just abstract indignation at treachery. No, it was a motive much more like the traditional one that has sent many an American father or brother or sweetheart reaching for his shotgun since long before films began. Let me explain.

All this bloodshed and what-not in Spain, the revolt of the army began. I know a lot of people say the government wasn't governing very strongly, people were being shot from time to time, which, according to the people who say it, was a reason for the generals, instead of helping the government to govern, to set about shooting a lot more. Well, they may have been right, we won't discuss that here. What we do know, and they and their friends have said it a hundred times themselves, is that they began. This means (mind you put it in your film) that that afternoon when it started the good people of Toledo didn't suddenly get excited and drive the cadets into their fortress. The cadets, *knowing that what they were about to do would meet the unanimous indignation of the people*, withdrew into their barracks. And they withdrew into it, *knowing they would be cut off for a long time.*

Yours sincerely,

Ivor Montagu



The Alcazar

DIGEST OF VIEWS :—

Somerset Maugham

Thirty years ago in literary circles God was all the fashion. It was good form to believe and journalists used Him to adorn a phrase or balance a sentence; then God went out (oddly enough with cricket and beer) and Pan came in. In a hundred novels his cloven hoof left its imprint on the sward; poets saw him lurking in the twilight on London commons, and literary ladies in Surrey, nymphs of an industrial age, mysteriously surrendered their virginity to his rough embrace. Spiritually they were never the same again. But Pan went out and now beauty has taken his place. People find it in a phrase, or a turbot, a dog, a day, a picture, an action, a dress. Young women in Cohorts, each of whom has written so promising and competent a novel, prattle of it in every manner from allusive to arch, from intense to charming; and the young men, more or less recently down from Oxford, but still trailing its clouds of glory, who tell us in the weekly papers what we should think of art, life, and the universe, fling the word with a pretty negligence about their close-packed pages. It is sadly frayed, Gosh, they have worked it hard! The ideal has many names and beauty is but one of them. I wonder if this clamour is anything more than the cry of distress of those who cannot make themselves at home in our heroic world of machines, and I wonder if their passion for beauty, the Little Nell of this shamefaced day, is anything more than sentimentality.

Cakes and Ale

Richard Ross

In the past two or three years, Laughton, in my opinion, has been relying for his effects on two or three physical "gags."

One is the frenzied eye-rolling. It expresses intense emotion. But what kind of emotion? Laughton doesn't tell you, though the context may. All he says is "Look at me. I'm very het up about something."

If you know what that something is, the chances are you'll say: "My, what acting!" If you don't know what it is, you may say anything you like.

Then there's the unorthodox punctuation touch. Listen to Laughton declaiming the Biblical excerpts in *Rembrandt*. He breaks off a sentence in the middle, starts up again, runs right over the full stop and pulls up with a jerk plumb in the centre of the next sentence. Laughton beats more red lights than any other actor I know.

It's a flashy bit of business. It's creative, because it presents you with an entirely new bit of prose. It's refreshing, because it avoids the schoolboy-recitation effect of badly delivered dialogue. But it's still cheating.

Add to this the "looking over the other man's shoulder" game, which means that Laughton's eyes are fixed on some distant horizon while the other actor in the scene just talks to himself; and the habit, akin to ignoring punctuation marks, of alternately shouting and whispering and in any case talking in a very urgent voice that matches the rolling eyeballs and, like them, doesn't always mean a lot.

Film Weekly

Aldous Huxley

One of the main functions of all popular fiction, drama and now the cinema has been to provide people with the means of assuaging, vicariously and in fancy, their unsatisfied longings, with the psychological equivalents of stimulants and narcotics. The power of such literature to impose upon those whom we may call its addicts a kind of drugged acceptance of even the most sordid realities is probably very considerable. In real life, one Englishman out of every sixty thousand is a peer, one out of every three hundred thousand has an income of a hundred thousand pounds a year. A census of fictional characters has never, so far as I know, been made; but I should guess that one out of a hundred, perhaps even one out of fifty, was either a lord, or a millionaire, or both at once.

The presence of so many aristocrats and plutocrats in our literature has two causes. The first is that the rich and powerful enjoy more liberty than the poor and so are in a position to make their own tragedies, not merely to have disaster forced upon them from outside. There can be no drama without personal choice; and, proverbially, beggars cannot be choosers. Only people with incomes can afford to do much choosing in this world. "Their rich and noble souls" (to quote one of Butler's Erewhonian authors) "can defy all material impediment; whereas the souls of the poor are clogged and hampered by matter, which sticks fast about them as treacle to the wings of a fly. . . . This is the secret of the homage which we see rich men receive from those who are poorer than themselves."

Of the homage, too, that they receive from authors. The rich, the powerful and the talented are freer than ordinary folk and are therefore the predestined subjects of imaginative literature. The other reason why literature is so lavish with wealth and titles is to be sought in the very fact that the real world is so niggardly of these things. Authors themselves and their readers desire imaginary compensations for their poverty and social insignificance. In the lordly and gilded world of literature they get it. Nor are poverty and powerlessness their only troubles; it is more than likely that they are also plain, have an insufficient and/or unromantic sex life; are married and wish they weren't or unmarried and wish they were; are too old or too young; in a word, are themselves and not somebody else. Hence those Don Juans, those melting beauties, those innocent young kittens, those beautifully brutal boys, those luscious adventuresses. Hence Hollywood, hence the beauty chorus. When I was last at Margate a gigantic new movie palace had just been opened there. Its name implied a whole social programme, a complete theory of art; it was called "Dream Land." At the present time the cinema acts far more effectively as the opium of the people than does religion.

The Spectator

T. S. Eliot

There are, of course, all sorts of beautiful effects that the film can get and that are impossible to the stage: such as the negroes paddling their war canoes in *Sanders of the River*. But I am concerned with something more fundamental. The cinema gives an illusion not of the stage but of life itself. When we see a great music-hall comedian on the stage, such as George Robey or Ernie Lotinga, we feel that he is conscious of his audience, that a great deal of the effect depends upon a sympathy set up between actor and audience, and we like to feel that some of his gags are spontaneous and were not thought of the night before. But when we see Laurel and Hardy, it is not Laurel and Hardy acting for *us*, it is Laurel and Hardy in another mess. The film is the vehicle of illusion, and it makes all the illusion of the stage seem crude. Then, again, while it is likely that voice reproduction will be further improved by science, I think that the spoken word will always be secondary in the film: in the best films to-day the voice is used sparingly, and interspersed with significant noises and even music. And, finally, there is no illusion of scenery on the stage that the worst-equipped film studio cannot improve upon.

So you see that it is reasonable that the stage should not attempt to compete with the film in illusion of scenery, and surprising realism of event. It should turn to the voice, to movement which is meant to be seen from several angles, and to the things which can be done by the actor himself and which cannot be done by his pictures. And all this points to the verse play.

Now you will not get the most out of poetic drama of *any* period if you think of it merely as a play in verse. You should not think of verse as something *added* to a play, which gives it the rank of 'literature'. I dare say that some verse plays have been written under this misunderstanding, and that is one reason why some verse plays are bad. A true verse play is not a play translated into verse, it is conceived and carried out in terms of verse. To work out a play in verse is to be working like a musician as well as like a prose dramatist: it is to see the thing as a whole musical pattern. And this is an entirely different thing from a play set to music. It is not like opera, but some musical form like the sonata or fugue. The verse dramatist must operate on you on two levels at once, dramatically, with the characters and plot. The requirements for a good plot are just as severe as for a prose play: in the one case as the other the essential thing is never to lose the audience's attention but to keep it always excited about what is going to happen next. It is fatal for a poet trying to write a play, to hope to make up for defects in the movement of the play by bursts of poetry which do not help the action. But under-

Cinema, Radio, Television, Theatre

T. S. Eliot (cont.)

neath the action, which should be perfectly intelligible, there should be a musical pattern which intensifies our excitement by reinforcing it with feeling from a deeper and less articulate level. Everybody knows that there are things that can be said in music that cannot be said in speech. And there are things that can be said in poetic drama that cannot be said in either music or ordinary speech.

The use of the chorus in the full sense has hitherto been foreign to English drama, except of course in a few plays, such as Swinburne's 'Atalanta in Calydon', which imitate the Greeks, though the essential function of the chorus, its place as a more or less detached observer or a commenter upon the action of the play, is performed by individual characters in some of Shakespeare's plays—for example, Feste the Clown in 'Twelfth Night', to whom it is given to end the play by singing a song to the audience. The chorus has an intermediate position between the characters of the play and their plot and the audience. It may be nearer to the audience, and so simply a commentator; or it may be nearer to the action of the play, and so taking part in it. For instance, in one of W. H. Auden's plays, 'The Dog Beneath the Skin', the chorus is almost an interlude addressing the audience. In his more recent play, 'Ascent of F.6', the chorus are two characters who are watching the play and are interested in it.

In my own 'Murder in the Cathedral' the chorus is still more concerned with the action of the play. But the function of the chorus depends on the intention and design of that particular play. In writing the words for a chorus one finds that the larger it is the simpler their words have to be.

But I have not time to say more about the special problem of the chorus. I only want to say that in making use of it we do not aim to *copy* Greek drama. There is a good deal about the Greek theatre that we do not know, and never shall know. But we know that some of its conventions cannot be ours. The characters frequently talk too long; the chorus has too much to say and holds up the action; usually not enough happens; and the Greek notion of climax is not ours. But the chorus has always fundamentally the same uses. It mediates between the action and the audience; it intensifies the action by projecting its emotional consequences, so that we as the audience see it doubly, by seeing its effect on other people. And it has the great advantage of being conveyed more fully in verse than in prose, and of supporting something of which I spoke at the beginning, the *musical pattern*, as well as the dramatic pattern, of the play.

The Listener

Hilda Matheson

One reason, I suppose, why the B.B.C. have been able to follow an increasingly apologetic policy in regard to poetry is that there is no commercial, professional, or organised vested interest behind it. Music, about which the English have less reason to boast than about their poetry, commands the support of academies, professional musicians, the interests of theatre, opera, music publishers, and the entertainment industry. Poetry is too individual and intimate an art for organised expression. Yet those who understand and believe in its necessity might perhaps be more courageous than they have shown themselves in voicing their beliefs, and more ready to study the special conditions and possibilities of broadcasting. And the B.B.C. might consider whether they could not, in their own interests, enlist the active help of poets in developing a medium in which the spoken word is one of the two chief actors. Poetry requires performance no less than music, and there seems no reason why distinguished poets should not plan and present programmes as successfully as distinguished musicians have planned recitals of music.

The Observer

St. John Ervine

There are sixteen cinemas in Cardiff, and by the time this article is published, a new "super-of-super cinema" will have been opened. Why, by the way, does not someone teach cinema people the English language? What sort of cinema is a super-of-super cinema? We shall presently have some illiterate film person telling us that his pictures are the most perfect and the most best and the super-greatest pictures in the world—better, on doubt, than the best. Might not a collection be taken up at every cinema door to send cinema people to night schools?

The Observer

Philip Guedalla

I am, by Act of Parliament, the British public. I am the fellow you have to get 8*s*. 6*d*. out of, by telling him that the six shilling seats are full up. I do not need to be told by four just men and one statutory woman what is a good picture and what is a bad picture. There is only one test of that—a machine that sits in front of a young lady in a glass box.

I am by trade a writer of books. A book that no one wants to read is a bad book; a picture that no one wants to see is a bad picture.

C.E.A. (London Branch) Banquet

The Spectator

Within ten years we may expect to find as many people enjoying television as now enjoy the radio.

The Times has already told us of some of the delights in store for us. "The healthiest curiosity . . . will demand to see as much as possible of the real world, not of artificially composed entertainment." "The Coronation procession will obviously give a great opportunity to satisfy an eager public." "How delightful to watch Hammond bat and Larwood bowl, Perry play tennis and Padgham play golf." Such is the real world. Shall we also see rebellions in Spain, misery in the depressed areas, concentration camps in Germany, the Scottsboro' boys being tried in the United States? It may be questioned. *The Times*' forecast of what will be good for us to see is no doubt entirely accurate. Yet one pleasure we can confidently add to *The Times*' list. Sir Thomas Inskip recently attributed the rise of modern dictatorships with some justice to the discovery of the microphone. It is perhaps a convenient way of taking the guilt from men and attributing it to objects; but even if it is not wholly true we need not deny the immense assistance which direct access to the ear of every citizen has given to demagogues in their ascent to power. They certainly will not miss the opportunities provided by television. Signor Mussolini's speeches are broadcast to the entire world; there are few moments in Germany or Italy when some speech of Mussolini, Hitler, Goering, Goebbels is not being radiated. Soon now, wherever we are, to the music of their voices will be added the charm of their presence.

Reflection on such prospects, or others of which we have been warned, is sobering. In his *Modern Times* Mr. Chaplin has given us a terrifying illustration of the possible uses of television—the face of the foreman suddenly projected on a screen and raising a menacing finger at the workman who has stayed too long in the washroom. Is it, then, only the King, the athlete, the dictator, the boss, or other figures well known to us now on the newsreel—the wife of the Cabinet Minister breaking a bottle of champagne on a battleship, the inspector of guards of honour, the politician making an election address, the Dionne quintuplets—whom we shall be allowed to see? If that is all we are shown, television will be, not an addition to our faculties, but merely a means of emphasising disproportionately certain aspects of life.

This forecast is indeed depressing, and it may be hoped it is false. For in spite of pessimism it is not possible to regret this latest of the gifts of applied science. Perhaps we may even become more hopeful by considering the development of the wireless by the B.B.C., which is now in control of television. It may be urged that many of the possibilities of wireless have not been exploited; that as an instrument of education it has been used by us with far less success than by the dictators as an instrument of propaganda ; that, except in music, it has contributed little to the development or appreciation of the arts; that it is apt to sacrifice what is best to what is merely innocuous, genteel, and soothing. . . .

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By our Film Technician

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". . . one spot-light of inadequate wattage."

I THINK YOUR readers may like to know that I recently dropped in at the National Picture House, Trafalgar Square, where a permanent programme of pre-movie productions is offered (this institution should not be confused with its more important neighbour the National Film Library).

I found to my surprise that colour had already arrived, and even reached a state of artistic development comparable with that of the latest four-colour processes, before the earliest picture in the collection was produced. Not so stereoscopy. A courteous attendant informed me that it was 'just round the corner,' but having occasion shortly afterwards to withdraw in the direction he had indicated, it suddenly occurred to me that he may have misheard my query. Colour, however, was often severely limited by deficient equipment. Rembrandt Studios, for example, clearly possessed in the final days of their financial embarrassment no lighting equipment at all except one spotlight of inadequate wattage. This led to a disagreeable brownish tinge in their productions. The camera-work throughout was, as might be expected, somewhat naïve. The use of dramatic camera-angles was briefly attempted in the late seventeenth century but soon abandoned. The use of colour-filters for enhancing cloud effects was, however, well understood, and the clouds which fill in the backgrounds of portraits of eighteenth-century big-wigs compare favourably with even the woolliest firmament of a modern documentary.

The censorship had not, in those days, developed the lucid principles which now guide its decisions.

The walls are a mass of controversial subject-matter, religious subject-matter, and scenes of cruelty. No objection seems to have been raised, even to such blatant examples of Peace Propaganda as Rubens' 'Peace putting the Horrors of War to flight,' Nor was any attempt made to classify pictures as A or U at the time of their release.

In short, a visit to the National brings home to one in conclusive fashion the changes which have taken place in the Picture Production Industry during the last quarter of a century. The student of Archaeology, Ethnology, Hagiology, and even of Art will find much to interest him here.

Moreover, once accustomed to the unfamiliar idea of keeping moving himself, while the pictures stay still, he will begin to feel a certain soothing sensation, which may almost amount to pleasure, in the contemplation of these first steps of mankind towards Pictorial Perfection. Admission is free, except on Duping Days.

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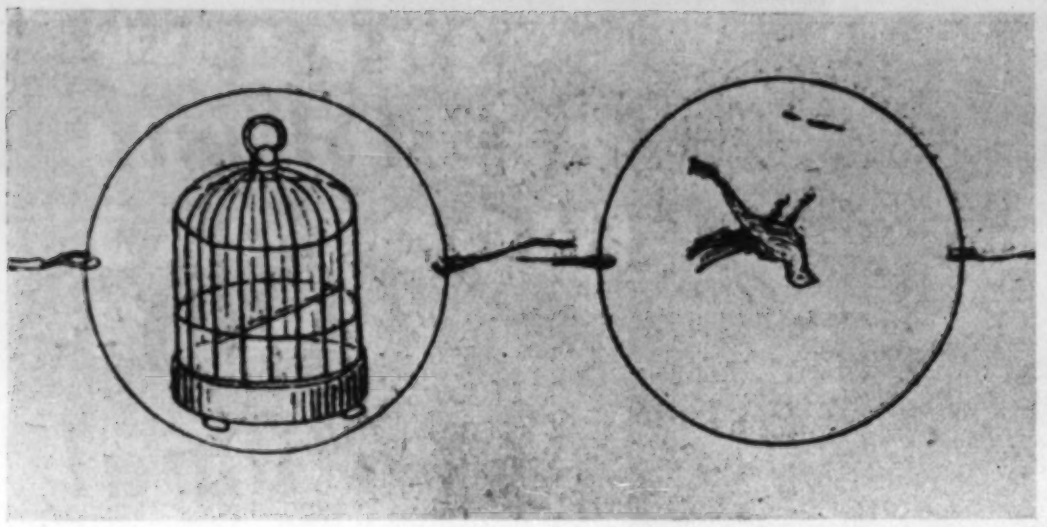


Fig. 1 The Traumatrope

HOW THE MOVIES BEGAN TO MOVE

Cinematic inventions pre-dated the invention of film by hundreds of years.

by

MARIE SETON

LONG before the invention of photography the idea of entertainment through the medium of reproduced movement had caught the imagination of scientists. This, the basic principle of cinema was under consideration hundreds of years before the existence of Lumière's, French pioneer of cinematography, whose miraculous device showed a train actually entering a station, a wall falling and a cavalry charge. These miracles came to pass in 1896.

The study of movement and subsequent experiments in reproducing it originated in the first studies made in optics and the phenomenon of light. These questions occupied the thoughts of the magician-scientists of the ancient world; while their experiments played a considerable part in the external aspect of the religious mysteries enacted throughout the history of Egypt, and also at Eleusis. The Arab philosopher-astronomer, Al-Hazen, wrote a tract on the elements of optics in the 12th century; Roger Bacon, a member of the Franciscan order was experimenting early in the 13th century at Ilchester; while Leonardo da Vinci included it in his other scientific researches during the second half of the 15th century.

Research into optics and the allied problem of light led to the invention of various machines of the magic lantern class, different mechanical devices for producing curious effects such as the Black Chamber of Jean-Baptiste Della Porta 1540–1615), and the extraordinary séances which Robertson held in Paris during the 18th century. Very often these and other experiments were used to make the public believe all manner of incredible things—skeletons, devils and apparitions being the chief characters in these exhibitions.

After 1824 numbers of optical games which had to be worked by hand were put on the market. Their names which are legion changed yearly and generally ended in the syllable trope or cope. The first was Traumatrope of Dr. Paris (Fig. 1). It was followed between 1829 and 1833 by the Phenakisticope, the invention of a Belgian doctor called Plateau (Fig. 2). Here the white disc on which the design is painted has to be spun while one watches the design through the slits in the black disc. Many of the designs on these discs which are easily changed are highly sytlized, and when in motion give an impression not unlike the abstract work of Len Lye and Otto Fischinger. There were many variations of this game. In 1838 an American, Dr. Horner, invented a slightly different rotating cylindrical Phenakisticope which he called the Daedleum. This was not patented until 1860, and when it did appear, it was under the name of the Zoëtrope, popularly known as the Wheel of Life (Fig. 3). The strip paintings used in these cylinders are usually of a grotesque character, and are drawn in the style of coloured cartoons. Figures 4 to 7 show how the movement develops. They are the drawings on a Zoëtrope strip belonging to an 1870 model now in the possession of Andrew Block. Mr. Block also has an amusing curiosity in the shape of a tiny Easter egg containing a miniature Wheel of Life, complete with several strips decorated with minute silhouette figures. The best collection of these forerunners of the cinema was made by the late Mr. Will Day, and is now in the Science Museum at South Kensington.

Meanwhile two other lines of research had been progressing for many years—the study of movement in men and in animals; and the possibility of photography. The studies of the alchemists in the 16th century led them to endeavour to reproduce an image on paper through the agency of light and varied chemical solutions. These experiments continued, first in one country then in another, for nearly three hundred years until photography was ultimately discovered in 1829 by two Frenchmen, Niepce and Daguerre. It was put on a commercial basis by Fox Talbot in England in 1841. The next important step was made in America when the

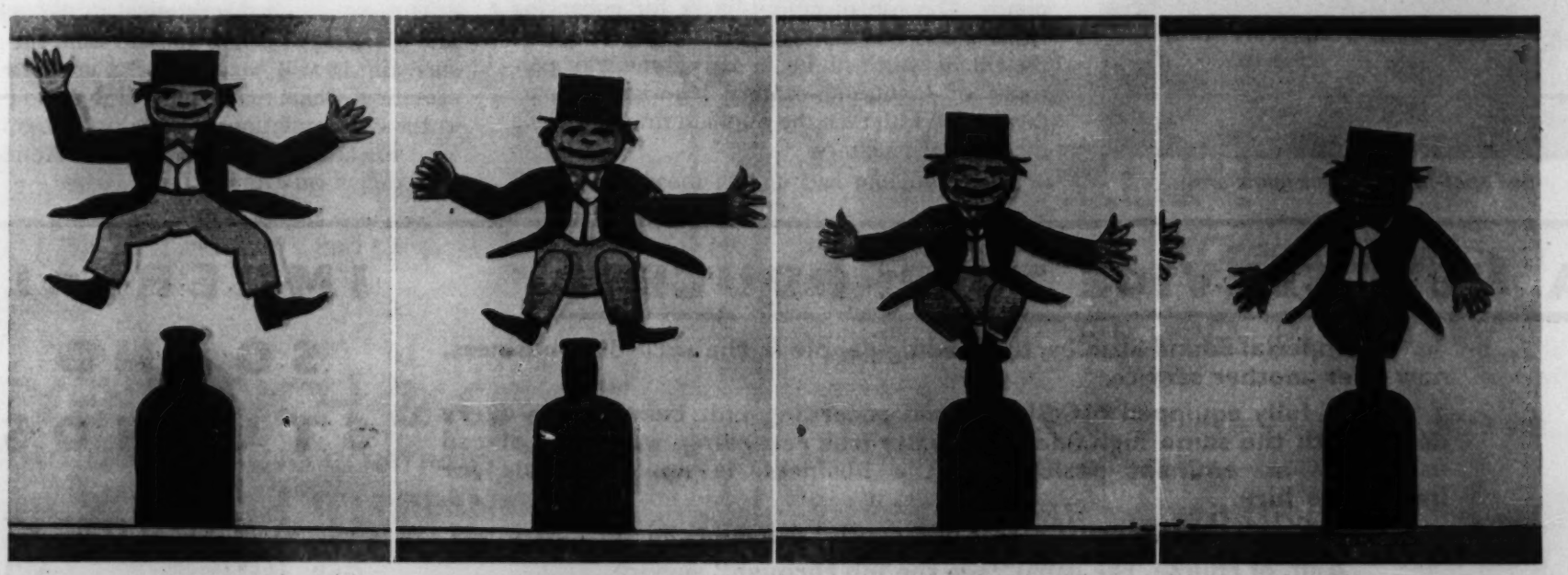


Fig. 4 Fig. 5 Fig. 6 Fig. 7

Hyatt brothers of New Jersey discovered celluloid in 1869. Sixteen years later, also in the United States, Eastman of Rochester began to manufacture it, making it available for cinematographic films twenty years after its discovery.

Side by side with the development of the technical and chemical processes involved in photography, were the studies being made by men to whom the analysis of the exact nature of movement was the important thing. In America Dr. Edward James Muybridge was making all kinds of experiments during the 1870's and 1880's with the animals from the Philadelphia Zoo. The physiologist, Dr. E. J. Marey, was analysing the flight of birds with the aid of a photographic gun in France. While in England, William Friese-Green, the photographer, and sometimes called the 'father of cinematography,' was getting very near to the discovery of real cinematography. Coinciding with the work of Friese-Green at the end of the eighties was the invention of Edison, the Kinetoscope. This was a sort of individual cinema for a single spectator—the pier peepshow.

It is also necessary to mention that in France a certain Leon Gaumont was taking a great interest in all the moving picture inventions. Also in France were the optical theatres of Emil Reynaud—in 1882, 1892 and 1896 they were: 'the theatre of the projected praxniscope,' 'the theatre with pantomimes of light,' and 'the theatre of animated painted photographs.'

Thus by divers routes the specialists and the public had become increasingly interested in moving pictures over a very long period of time. At last, on the 22nd of March, 1896, a short film invented by Auguste and Louis Lumière of Lyon was shown in Paris.

In forty years that invention ceased being the rival of slot-machines, peep-shows and darts, and became the fifth largest industry in the United States of America.

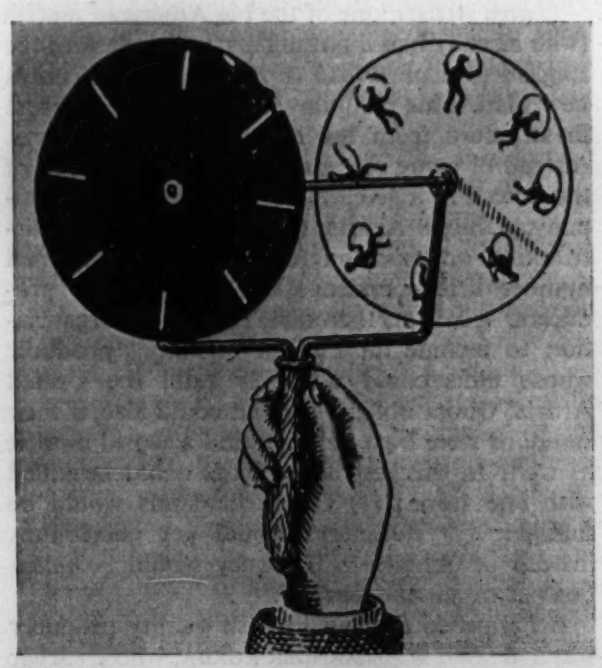


Fig. 2 *The Phenakisticope invented (between 1829-1833) by Plateau, a Belgian Doctor.*

Fig. 3 (*Right*). *The Zoëtrope, known as the Wheel of Life.*

"Blown out, baked out and broke"

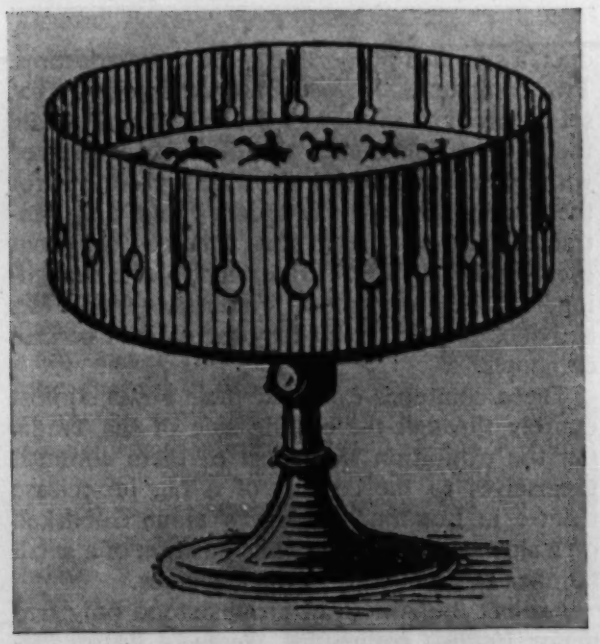
Two Views on

"The Plow that Broke the Plains"

SCENARIO AND DIRECTION: PARE LORENTZ
PHOTOGRAPHY: RALPH STEINER AND PAUL STRAND
PRODUCTION: RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION, U.S.A.

This film is more than propaganda praising Roosevelt's arrest of the slump on the American wheatlands. From the first shots of cattle, feeding on a hillside in the clear sunlit air, dwarfed by the country's immensity so that they look like ants on a mound, this film is permeated with a sense of the richness and vastness of the Central Great Plains and of the tragedy of history's majestic march to the disaster of thousands. The war sets up a call for wheat. The bright, sharp plough poises on the grass where cattle fed, stabs, and the grass cascades behind it in a wave. In place of the cow-puncher on his horse watching from the hilltop, the wheat tractors drive in rows like tanks to the music of "Mademoiselle from Armentières." "More wheat! More wheat!" is the slogan. "Wheat will Win the War." The Central Great Plains are a sea of wheat and prices rise on the ticker. But even wars must end. The war music goes on, but it is in a minor key. Wheat may have won the war, but no one wants to win the peace. Men may starve, but there is no market for wheat. Where wheat illimitably waved is now a desert of dust. The printing machines spew forth pleas to take the farms at any price. But the cortège of flivvers from the homes buried by dust does not end, and men who did men's work now sit whittling sticks by the roadside, and beg for old jobs. Roosevelt steps in with a policy of land conservation and State assistance. Although the policy still smacks of pandering to scarcity, the improvement seems real.

There is no doubt that this production, assisted by Thomson's music, and the rich, rhythmic commentary has caught the romance and tragedy of this great area. Why is it that only film reporting of this type seems to catch the romance of human enterprise and films purporting to be romances are soggy and dull? The best drama dealing with such a subject was Edward G. Robinson's *I Loved a Woman*. But a level of poetry is reached in this 20-minute piece of journalism that beats them all. H. A.



* * *

"High winds and sun. A country without rivers, and with little rain." This is the record of what fifty years have done to the four hundred million acres of prairie in the Middle West States of North America.

The first half of this film sells the so intelligent audience a richly deserved pup. In memory of Puerilia, cattle and cow-punchers pass in silhouette across a panchromatic sky. Oh! the grandeur of Man and Raw Nature! Pity the poor pioneer!

1914. The bombshell bursts and the boom begins. Tractors are intercut with tanks, bayonets with ploughshares. Land is to be had for the asking: "Buy land and let the Government farm it: purchase price returned on a year's crop." Hurrah for Capital and the Great War, who have created the Middle West! In the audience the Left wing gnaws its fingernails, regretting wasted documentary opportunities; and the Right purrs contentedly, watching wealth evolve in the way it understands. By 1923 all that green grass is touchstone-turned to golden wheat.

Grain is pouring from a thresher; on the Exchange a tape-machine ticks out the soaring prices; grain pours from the thresher; the tape ticks on, tugs at the ormolu machine, pulls it crashing to the floor. The tractors are idle and rusty, the wheat-fields unsown, the slump is on.

"High winds and sun. A country without rivers and with little rain." Over the struggling farms storm-clouds gather—and break not to water but to dust. Greed had stripped the grass from the prairies, and set cattle to graze on the stubble: there was nothing left to bind the soil against the wind. Nature formed the Sahara slowly: Man created the Great American Desert inside half a century. Now begins the Exodus of the farmers, "blown out, baked out and broke."

And so, left and right, the pup is held. The Middle West is devastated, depopulated. The Resettlement Administration steps in. It finds forty million acres beyond remedy, and two hundred million severely damaged. Roosevelt's scheme lends money to the farmers, encourages layout of farms. But more must be done, if the Middle West is to be saved. This film is not self-gratulatory, pleased at ingenious advertisement. It is an appeal to the American Nation: "The wind still blows, and the sun still bakes the land."

Throughout the United States the chain-cinemas rejected this film. D. A.

Secrets of British Film Finance

A FILM COUNCIL INVESTIGATION

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT ALL FACTS AND FIGURES IN THIS REPORT REFERRING TO COMPANY FINANCE REPRESENT THE POSITION AT THE END OF OCTOBER, 1936

ENGLAND is at the peak of a gold-rush in films. In the first ten months of 1936 loans of nearly thirteen million pounds were poured into the three great spheres of production, renting and exhibition. Banks, insurance companies, legal investment trusts, even motor manufacturers are falling over each other in their eagerness to stake a claim. Men and women who have scarcely given a thought to films all their lives are clamouring for posts in the studios, attracted by the rumour of high salaries and speedy promotion.

But if we take even a superficial glance at this apparent El Dorado we find some strange paradoxes. In spite of the torrent of money recently poured into them, few British production companies have paid any dividends for the last four years, which means that most have never paid any dividends at all. In spite of the rapid development in production and in studio construction, the Association of Cine Technicians must battle unceasingly to get employment for British technicians. In spite of the yearly-rising demands of the Quota Act for British footage, the overwhelming domination of the British market by American interests, though somewhat lessened, is by no means undermined.

The present meteoric expansion of the British film trade constitutes one of the most dangerous and highly speculative booms in the history of finance. At present it is passing its peak point. But before we can examine its causes and probable consequences we must go back to 1927 and follow the results of the passing of the all-important Cinematograph Films Act. From the passage of this Act the story of the British film industry virtually begins.

In brief, the Quota Act made it compulsory for renters and exhibitors operating in this country to offset a rising percentage of British-made films against films imported from abroad. Those failing to distribute and to show the prescribed quantities of British footage were made liable to heavy fines.

This innocent and well-intended piece of legislature immediately procured the desired effect, for it virtually created the production side of the British industry. But it also had the little foreseen effect of creating quantity at the expense of quality, for in operation it made the powerful American interests financially responsible for the desired stimulation of British production. And that responsibility the American interests naturally proceeded to discharge as cheaply as possible.

Before 1928 the London renters of the eight giant American companies were handling about nine-tenths of all the feature films shown in this country. But under the new Quota regulations these renters found themselves compelled to distribute, in addition to their own American product, a specified proportion of British-made films. Two companies, *Warner-First National* and *Fox*, set up production subsidiaries in England to fulfil their Quota obligations. The other six contracted with numerous British independent producers for the production of their Quota films, and contracted on tight terms. Thus it came about that even as late as 1935 50 per cent of the expanding British production industry found its activities largely dictated by the great American combines.

These combines exercised their power almost entirely through the renting side of the Trade. On the exhibition side most of them confined themselves to the control of a big pre-release theatre in London. *Paramount* alone embarked on a slow campaign for the acquisition of a small number of super-halls in the key cities.

Against the American groups stood only two major English companies, *Gaumont British Picture Corporation* and *Associated British Picture Corporation*. Through a series of amalgamations and acquisitions these companies steadily expanded their activities to cover all three spheres of production, renting and exhibition. But their real strength lay in their vertical organisation, based on the control of extensive cinema circuits; and it was on the acquisition of new cinemas that their chief expansion policy was founded. Apart from these two companies the English exhibition field was split into a number of small circuits and a considerable majority of singly-owned halls, content from the box-office viewpoint to accept the offerings of the American renters for their main programmes.

As year followed year the Quota percentage for British footage rose, and British production increased from about 16% of all feature films registered to nearly 30%. But the situation precipitated by the Act still remained. American finance, sparingly allocated, was still the basis of half the production work in the country. To fulfil their Quota the Americans demanded cheap films; and cheap films meant quick production. Hence the "Quota quickies," which, as they increased in number, became the bane of exhibitors all across the country. Forced by law to show them since the remaining British output was insufficient for their Quota needs, exhibitors complained more and more loudly against their bad quality.

Then in 1933, when the widespread agitation against the quickies was reaching its height, an event took place which was to change the whole attitude towards Quota production.

United Artists, one of the big American renters (who already had a renting arrangement with the English firm of *British & Dominion*) tried out a new plan. This company was basically different in structure from the other American renters. Instead of being charged with the distribution of the output of a given American production company, United Artists was a co-operative distributing organisation for the films of a small number of independent American "quality" producers. Why not, therefore, extend the organisation to include an English "quality" producer whose films could not only fulfil the United Artists' Quota obligations, but could also, if their standard were high enough, find a world market as well? In this way three birds could be killed with one stone: (1) Quota demands would be fulfilled; (2) exhibitors would get good films instead of quickies; (3) money would be taken both at home and abroad.

It happened that an English quality producer was available in ALEXANDER KORDA, whose earlier English films had shown considerable production polish. The fact that he was Hungarian was of no consequence since the Board of Trade could be satisfied by the employment of the proper proportion of English labour in production work, Before long *The Private Life of Henry VIII* was in circulation through United Artists.

TRAVEL at dusk on the Great Western main line from Paddington to Birmingham. Fifteen miles out of London a thick plantation of pine trees hides the view to the right of the line. Suddenly, through the pines glows a fierce purple light, like a giant oxy-acetylene welder. A moment later the trees have swept past to reveal a great mass of buildings, still white in the gathering darkness. Every window blazes with light, and little figures can be seen hurrying from room to room. In the dazzling purple glare there stand the skeletons of scaffolding and strange facades, while high up on a rostrum a tiny figure standing by a tripod waves its arm. A second afterwards the buildings of a small country station blot out the whole scene, and as the platform roars past you glimpse the name of the station —Denham.

At Elstree, Welwyn, Shepherd's Bush, Islington, Shepperton, Iver, a dozen other studios are in the same feverish rush of production. At the same time, all across the country, queues of people wait outside the new local super-cinema, while perhaps two streets away the steel girders of yet another half-finished 2,000-seater rise into the sky.

THE LORD LUKE OF PAVENHAM

CHAIRMAN AND MANAGING DIRECTOR OF:—
Bovril Ltd.
Argentine Estates of Bovril Ltd.

CHAIRMAN OF:—
Bovril Australian Estates Ltd.
Estates Control Ltd.
Santa Fee Land Co. Ltd.
Virol Ltd.

DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN OF:—
Ashanti Goldfields Ltd.

DIRECTOR OF:—
Australian Mercantile, Land & Finance Co. Ltd.
Bibiani (1927) Ltd.
Forestal Land, Timber & Railways Co. Ltd.
Lloyds Bank Ltd.
National Bank of Australasia Ltd.
Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd.

JOSEPH ARTHUR RANK, D.L., J.P.

DIRECTOR OF:—
B. I. Transport Co. Ltd.
Birkenhead Silo Co. Ltd.
Buchanan's Flour Mills Ltd.
Ernest Joyce Ltd.
Horace Marshall & Sons Ltd.
John Herdman & Sons Ltd.
Joseph Rank Ltd.
K.O. Cereals Ltd.
Methodist Publications Ltd.
Newsagents & Stationers Supply Co. Ltd.
Pinewood Studios Ltd.
Ranks (Ireland) Ltd.
Ranks Ltd.
Riverside Milling Co. Ltd.
Roberts & Wrate Ltd.
Springfield Stores Ltd.
Universal Corp. of America
Yoma (England) Ltd.
Yoma Ltd.

THE RT. HON. LORD PORTAL OF LAVERSTOKE

CHAIRMAN OF:—
Wiggins, Teape & Co. (1919) Ltd.
Wiggins, Teape & Alex. Pirie (Merchants) Ltd.

DIRECTOR OF:—
Alex. Pirie & Sons Ltd.
Allied Paper Merchants (W. T. & Co.) Ltd.
Annandale & Sons Ltd.
Busbridge & Co. (1919) Ltd.
Charles Morgan & Co. Ltd.
Commercial Union Assurance Co. Ltd.
Compass Investment Trust Ltd.
Greaseproof Paper Mills Ltd.
Portals Ltd.

The result was electrifying, since, contrary to the expectations of many, the policy succeeded. *Henry VIII* not only fulfilled its fundamental duty of providing Quota footage; according to a report in the *Motion Picture Herald* (given on Mr. Korda's authority) it grossed approximately $2,500,000.

The new situation gave food for the deepest thought in the more Anglican sections of Wardour Street. A method had been found whereby the Quota Act, which had hitherto brought discredit to British producers and distress to exhibitors, could be turned not only to the credit of all concerned, but what was far more important, to profitable financial account. Two essentials were necessary to the expansion of the scheme: a supply of quality producers of the calibre of Mr. Korda, and the necessary finance for their productions.

The first of these essentials was almost miraculously supplied by an influx during 1933 and 1934 of foreign producers, stars and technicians seeking employment in this country largely as a result of the dislocated condition of European production following the accession of Hitler. The second essential, the raising of production finance, we shall examine in some detail later on.

United Artists now proceeded to consolidate their position and to expand their Anglo-American alliance. During 1935–36 they continued their distribution arrangements with the expanding Korda enterprises and with British and Dominion, and made new arrangements with a host of small production companies now springing into existence as a result (*a*) of the new Quota policy, and (*b*) the increasing availability of quality producers. These companies included: *Atlantic Film Productions* (registered Nov. 1935), *Bergner-Czinner Productions*, *British Cine Alliance* (Aug. 1935), *Criterion Film Productions* (June 1935), *Erich Pommer Productions*, *Garrett-Klement Productions* (March 1935), *Pall Mall Productions* (March 1936), *Trafalgar Productions* (Jan. 1936), and *Victor Saville Productions* (April 1936).

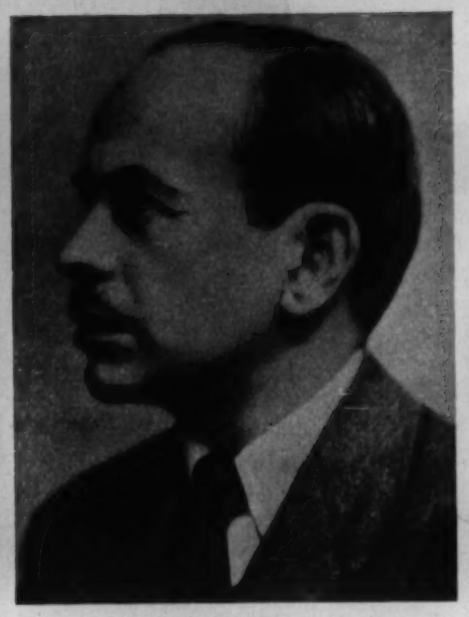
During the past year alone United Artists increased their English production affiliations from 2 to 11, so that the number of English producers within the organisation actually exceeded that of American producers, though the control of the distributing machinery remains in American hands. It should further be noted that the company does not directly participate in the production finances of these enterprises.

At the same time United Artists began to strengthen their renting position by acquiring interests in the exhibition sphere. At present two U.A. directors appear on the board of the Entertainments and General Investment Corporation, which is the largest shareholder in *County Cinemas Ltd.*, a growing circuit of over 50 halls controlled by C. H. DONADA. Further, it is reported on the authority of OSCAR DEUTSCH that U.A. have acquired a large interest (believed to amount to 50%) in the rapidly expanding Odeon circuit.

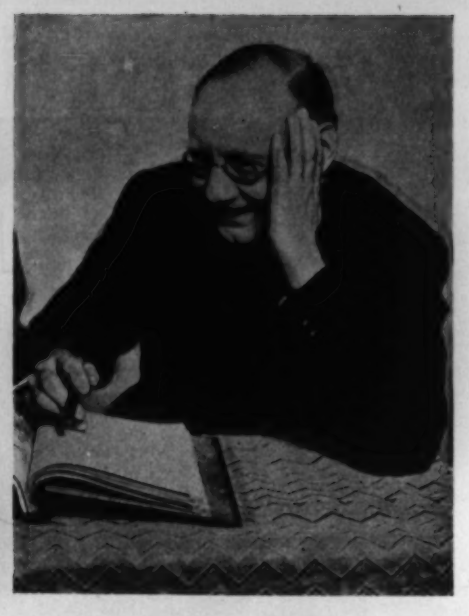
It was not long before the first Anglo-American alliance was followed by a second. Early in 1936 the control of *Universal* passed out of the hands of its founder, Carl Laemmle, into those of a consortium, in which A. H. Giannini, San Francisco banker, and J. Cheever Cowdin, finance and aircraft magnate, represent the chief American interests. But on the new Universal board English interests are also strongly represented by JOSEPH ARTHUR RANK (of the Rank milling combine) and LESLIE WILLIAM FARROW (chartered accountant, and holder of some 24 chairmanships and directorships in English industrial concerns). Mr. Rank and Mr. Farrow are at the same time directors of an English film finance concern known as *General Cinema Finance Corporation*. In March of last year the G.C.F. Corporation took control of *General Film Distributors*, an important new renting organisation founded, with the support of the English interests already mentioned, by C. M. WOOLF after his resignation from Gaumont-British in May 1935. The English renting organisation of Universal was then merged with General Film Distributors. In this way any English quality films distributed by G.F.D. serve as Quota for the American Universal output, and at the same time may benefit by the international distributing facilities of the new joint concern.

Herbert Wilcox

C. M. Woolf



Max Schach



John Corfield

With the merger complete, the stage was set for another, and practically simultaneous programme of expansion. On the exhibition side G.F.D. are building up a circuit of their own chiefly by the acquisition of existing halls. On the production side certain members of the group are closely associated with Pinewood Studios, a four-floor plant at Iver, Bucks, which began work late last year.

And just as a host of production units clustered round the expanding United Artists organisation, so a galaxy of independent producers associated themselves with the growing G.F.D. concern. During 1936 G.F.D. distributed films made by *British National Films*, *British Pictorial Productions*, *Capitol Film Corporation*, *Cecil Film Productions*, *City Film Corporation*, *Grafton Films*, *Herbert Wilcox Productions*, and *J. G. & R. B. Wainwright Ltd.*

Thus we see the emergence of two powerful Anglo-American alliances, deriving their strength mainly from their renting and theatre-acquiring activities. By a policy of "Quota films for a world market" each has virtually created a satellite swarm of production units dependent upon the central organisations for the distribution of their output, but apparently mostly obtaining their finance from elsewhere. If we examine the registration data of production companies over the last five years, we find an annual increase as follows:—

Year	*Production companies registered*
1932	46
1933	64
1934	86
1935	108
1936 (10 months)	87

Moreover, in the film registration data we find that over the last two years the percentage of British quality films handled by the two Anglo-American renters and potentially seeking a world market has risen from 4.2% to 16.6%.

But let it not be thought that the two groups are separate to the extent of violent competition. Their cross-relationships are numerous and interesting. A. H. GIANNINI, one of the Universal voting trustees, is at the same time president and chairman of United Artists. In addition, several of the G.F.D. executives are on the board of British & Dominion, one of the United Artists producers. B. & D. have also a part interest in the new Pinewood Studios, which are closely linked to G.F.D. and used by several of the production units associated with the G.F.D. group. Through B. & D. also, both groups are in touch with Paramount since B. & D. produce the bulk of the Paramount Quota. There is a further possibility that the production units associated with the main groups will before long embrace at least one newcomer. A. H. Giannini is also a voting trustee of the American Columbia organisation. In August 1936, it was announced that Paul Soskin Productions, a new production unit with strong financial backing, had contracted for the production of eight features for Columbia at a total cost of £500,000. And the first Soskin feature was released through United Artists.

In the midst of these vast expansion programmes, what was taking place in the two big English groups which, till recently, were the sole major rivals of the American combines—Gaumont-British and A.B.P.C.? They had pursued a steady policy of expansion in the exhibition field, until at the end of 1935 they owned between them some 560 cinemas out of a total of about 4,400 in the country. A.B.P.C. had become largely a holding company controlling the A.B.C. circuit, the B.I.P. and Welwyn studios and the distributing organisations of Pathé Pictures and Wardour Films.

The interests of the Gaumont group were spreading beyond its own circuits and its studios at Shepherd's Bush into the formation of subsidiary companies including G.B.D. (distributing), G.B.E. (equipments), G.B.I. (educational production), and G.B. News. In addition, its interests spread to the Gainsborough Studios at Islington, British Acoustic Films, and more recently to Baird Television and other film and radio concerns.

In the summer of 1936 Fox and its close ally Loew made a spectacular bid for the virtual control of the Gaumont group. Had the negotiations gone through at the time a third Anglo-American alliance would have been made, this time of truly gigantic proportions, for Loew, in addition to owning large theatre properties in U.S.A., controls Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. But shortly afterwards the headlines of the national press splashed the news that John Maxwell, representing A.B.P.C., had done a lightning deal with Gaumont and allied the two great English groups. Some even suggested that Mr. Maxwell was now to become the big boss of the British movies.

The truth was somewhat different. The American move towards control of Gaumont was, indeed, countered by a closer relationship between G.B. and A.B.P.C. For this purpose 250,000 "B" (*non-voting*) shares in Metropolis and Bradford Trust (the holding company controlling G.B.) were bought from the Ostrer Brothers by Mr. Maxwell on behalf of A.B.P.C. But the 10,000 "A" (*voting*) shares remained under the control of Isidore Ostrer and the Twentieth-Century-Fox interests, the former retaining the majority with 5,100. Mr. Maxwell has claimed to hold an option on the purchase of the 5,100 voting shares held by Mr. Ostrer, but the Fox interests state that the articles of association of the company give them the right to veto this transfer. But since the A.B.P.C. interests cite another clause in the articles in their favour the outcome of the matter, if taken to law, would by no means be certain.

Moreover, it is of interest to note the price paid by A.B.P.C. for their 250,000 non-voting 8*s.* 3*d.* shares. According to the *Financial Times* of October 21st 1936, the price was £350,000 in cash and an allotment of 300,000 ordinary 5*s.* A.B.P.C. shares; that is, a total of some £618,125 at the market value of the latter at the time. The price for the 5,100 voting shares "to be acquired later" was understood to be in the neighbourhood of £800,000. Therefore, if the deal were completed, the Ostrer share would be approximately £1,418,000. Revalued in terms of the Gaumont shares controlled by the Ostrer holding in Metropolis and Bradford Trust, the total price would amount to £1 18*s.* 11*d.* per G.B. ordinary share, at a time when the market value of the latter was 16*s.* 9*d.*

It is evident that the world-market policy of the two rising Anglo-American groups caused considerable perplexity in Gaumont. This perplexity was reflected at the much-belated annual general meeting of the company on November 2nd 1936. At this meeting Mark Ostrer described the position of the company in detail. From his discussion of the accounts it appeared that the overdraft with the National Provincial Bank was £1,149,785 (an increase of £482,000 over the previous year), £247,904 of which might be taken as the approximate bank indebtedness in respect of film production. The company's efforts to produce and distribute for a world market were held mainly responsible for the heavy additional expenditure. The abandoning of this policy and the production of cheap films for the home market would, it was stated, automatically restore the profitability of the company's production activities. For the first time in the company's history the directors recommended the passing of the ordinary dividends with the object of placing £200,000 in a special reserve, in spite of the fact that the profits were stated to be £715,500. (The *Financial News*, however, pointed out that the satisfactory profit position was largely due to the fact that the period of accounts for one of the G.B. subsidiaries had been extended to 14 months, thus doubling its dividends.) In the absence of a consolidated balance sheet for the whole group it was impossible to understand the real financial position of the company. A number of shareholders made it abundantly clear to the directorate that they wished to see such a balance sheet, and the meeting was finally adjourned to allow of its preparation.

On December 17th Mr. Mark Ostrer moved, at the adjourned meeting, that the company's profit and loss account be adopted. An amendment was, however, put forward demanding that the accounts be not adopted and that a committee of shareholders be set up with power to investigate the books. Mr. Ostrer, apparently dissatisfied with the result of a hand vote demanded a poll, and stated that the result would be announced as soon as possible.

He further mentioned that those present represented 80,000 shares, while he held proxies for 127,000 shares, and that these were in addition to the shares held by the directors.

Let us now leave Mr. Ostrer with his expectant shareholders, and Mr. Maxwell with his 250,000 non-voting shares, and turn our attention to the important question of the finance behind the two big Anglo-American groups, United Artists and Universal-G.F.D.

It has been made clear that the basic structure of these groups takes the form of a central renting organisation associated for purposes of distribution with a cluster of production companies rapidly increasing in number, but in the majority of cases apparently not directly financed by the renting concerns. Yet it is certain that between January 16th and October 30th 1936, more than £4,100,000 was poured into British production, creating an unprecedented boom. Where did this torrent of wealth come from? Who authorised the pumping of it into an industry long regarded as one of the most speculative in the world? What was the purpose behind it?

We will begin with the United Artists group. United Artists itself need not long detain us. It is a private company controlled by its American parent concern, and nearly all its issued capital of £7,500 is held in the name of its chairman and manager, MURRAY SILVERSTONE. Of the production groups associated with it, the most important are the Korda companies concerned with the financing of London Film Productions and Denham Studios. This group consists of some ten companies, four of which were floated in 1935 with a capital of £10 each in £1 shares. The largest of the ten is *London Film Productions Ltd.*, formed in 1932 with an issued capital of £406,054. The board, with Mr. Korda as chairman, includes SIR CONNOP GUTHRIE, Bart., who is also a director of United Artists (and is besides interested in Raleigh Cycles and the Lincoln Wagon & Engine Co.), E. STEVINSON, a director of C. T. Bowring & Co. (Insurance) Ltd. (the insurance subsidiary of the old-established Bowring merchant and shipping group), and J. R. SUTRO, various members of whose family own blocks of shares in the company.

The largest individual shareholder is the *Prudential Assurance Co. Ltd.*, with 25,000 def. ord. and 250,000 pref. ord. Moreover, after previous loan transactions, the Prudential on October 12th, 1936, took up a new debenture issue (amount not specified), while two days later C. T. Bowring & Co. (Insurance) Ltd., took up a further debenture issue of £274,702. The other main shareholders are concealed behind a number of bankers' nominee companies.

Apart from the big insurance interests, the recent reorganisation of Denham Laboratories Ltd. possibly indicates another financial group interested in the Korda activities. For on the board of that company appear the names of S. G. WARBURG and D. OLIVER. S. G. Warburg is a partner of M. M. Warburg & Co., Hamburg, and of Warburg & Co., Amsterdam, the Continental bankers related through the Warburg family with the New York bankers Kuhn, Loeb & Co. D. Oliver is a director of Grundwert A.G., Hamburg.

There are two other studio-owning enterprises associated with United Artists; British & Dominions and Worton Hall Studios. The cross-references of the B. & D. Corporation with the Universal-G.F.D. group are perhaps stronger than their relations with United Artists, and it is therefore more convenient to examine it in conjunction with that group. Suffice it for the moment to say that none of the B. & D. shareholders control as much as 4% of its capital, while many are hidden behind bankers' nominee companies. Those identifiable include men whose other interests cover goldmines, "Punch," motor cars, chocolate, railways and canals. Worton Hall Studios was registered in January 1936, with A. S. CUNNINGHAM-REID, M.P., MARCEL HELLMAN, D. FAIRBANKS, JUNR., PAUL CZINNER and A. G. SMITH as directors. Dr. Czinner subsequently resigned.

We must now glance at nine non-studio-owning production units associated with the United Artists group for distribution purposes. *Atlantic Film Productions*, with a capital of £30,000, has charges of £58,750 outstanding in favour of Aldgate Trustees Ltd.; *Criterion Film Productions*, capital £10,000, has charges of £212,000 outstanding in favour of Aldgate Trustees Ltd., and Capt. Cunningham-Reid; *Trafalgar Productions*, capital £25,000, has charges of £450,000 (Aldgate Trustees) and a mortgage of £60,000 (Equity and Law Life Assurance Society); *Victor Saville Productions*, capital £10,000, has charges of £320,000 in favour of Denham Securities Ltd. Three more—*British Cine Alliance*, *Garrett-Klement Pictures* and *Pall Mall Productions*—have capitals of £25,000, £10,000 and £10,000 respectively, while the financial position of the remaining two—*Bergner-Czinner Productions* and *Erich Pommer Productions*—we were unable to trace.

It will be seen, however, that most of these companies have comparatively small capital resources, and that at least four of them have heavy debts outstanding, presumably in respect of their production costs. We will discuss the identity of their creditors at a later stage, in the meantime turning our attention to the second Anglo-American group, Universal-G.F.D.

It has been pointed out that the holding company controlling this group is the General Cinema Finance Corporation. In examining the directorate of this company we find ourselves face to face with some of the most successful figures in the world of English finance-capital. First: THE RT. HON. LORD PORTAL OF LAVERSTOKE, chairman of the great paper combine of Wiggins, Teape & Co. (1919) Ltd., and Wiggins, Teape & Alex. Pirie (Merchants) Ltd., and director of eight other concerns besides. Through his mother, a daughter of the Hon. St. Leger Glyn and granddaughter of the first Lord Wolverton, Lord Portal is also related to that famous banking family.* Second: JOSEPH ARTHUR RANK, D.L., J.P., who holds some 20 directorships in interests largely concerned with milling, wholesale newsagency and films. Third: PAUL LINDENBURG, managing director of S. Japhet & Co., the great merchant bankers, and director of vast financial concerns in the Netherlands, Austria, Rumania and Canada. Fourth: LESLIE WILLIAM FARROW, chartered accountant, holder of four chairmanships, three deputy-chairmanships and 17 directorships in paper and other interests. Fifth: LORD LUKE OF PAVENHAM, chairman and managing director of Bovril Ltd., and with other interests ranging from goldfields and banks to publishing. These five men between them hold some 75 directorships in large-scale financial or industrial undertakings, and all, with the exception of Lord Luke, reappear on the board of G.F.D.

In the production sphere the most important studio enterprise associated with the group is Pinewood Studios Ltd., with a nominal capital of £300,000, and a charge of the same amount in favour of Equity and Law Life Ass. Soc. On the board of this company we find J. A. RANK, CHARLES BOOT, J.P. (who holds six chairmanships and 18 directorships mostly in building and real estate interests), JOHN CORFIELD, who, with Mr. Rank, is also a director of British National Films;

* This fact may perhaps throw an unexpected light on the recent transfer of control over the Denman Street Trust Co. Ltd. (having important holdings in G.B.P.C. and Moss Empires) from the Ostrers to a new board on which sits M. G. Glyn of Glyn, Mills & Co.

HAROLD G. JUDD, chartered accountant and holder of seven chairmanships and 13 other directorships, and SPENCER MORTIMER REIS. In addition all the directors of B. & D. (E. R. Crammond, C. M. Woolf, Herbert Wilcox, Capt. the Hon. R. Norton, and W. H. Cockburn) sit on the Pinewood board, and B. & D. are reported to hold a ten-year management agreement for the studios.

During 1936 G.F.D. was associated with the following production units in the distribution of their films: *British National Films*, a concern with a nominal capital of £100,000, whose third director (besides Mr. Rank and Mr. Corfield) is LADY A. H. YULE, widow of the millionaire financier, Sir Andrew Yule; *British Pictorial Productions*, with a capital of £5,000; *Capitol Film Corporation*, with a capital of £125,000 and charges of £1,520,000 outstanding with Aldgate Trustees Ltd., and of £160,000 with Equity and Law Life Ass. Soc.; *Cecil Film Productions*, with a nominal capital of £1,000 and charges of £415,000 with Aldgate Trustees; *City Film Corporation*, with a nominal capital of £1,000 and advances amounting to £233,150 from Aldgate Trustees, who appointed a receiver and manager for the company in April 1936; *Herbert Wilcox Productions*, with a capital of £100; and *Grafton Films Ltd.*, and *J. G. & R. B. Wainwright Ltd.*, whose financial position we could not trace.

Here again, therefore, we find a position similar to that of the United Artists group: apart from the main studio enterprises production is carried on by a large number of units mostly with comparatively small capitals and some with heavy debts outstanding.

Before drawing conclusions from this method of finance and investigating the sources of the outstanding production debts, it will be instructive to take a passing glance at one or two of the other groups in the field. In the production sphere influenced by *Associated British Film Distributors* we find a similar structure, save that in this case the renting concern, A.B.F.D., is owned and controlled by the producing organisation *Associated Talking Pictures Ltd.*, which has an authorised capital of £125,000 and owns studio plant at Ealing. During the first ten months of 1936 A.B.F.D. released films made by the following production units other than A.T.P.: *Alexander Film Productions; Franco-London Films* (capital, £5,000, practically all of which is owned by the Société de Credit pour l'Industrie et le Commerce, Paris); *Joe Rock Productions* (capital £100); *Leslie Fuller Productions* (capital £1,000); *Phœnix Films; Stanley Lupino Productions* (capital £1,000); and *Toeplitz Productions* (capital £100,000 and with charges of £32,000 outstanding with Aldgate Trustees).

Among the smaller renters *Butcher's Film Service* deserves mention. This concern is owned by British Photographic Industries Ltd., a company with a nominal capital of £1,000,000, which also controls Ensign Ltd., the Houghton-Butcher companies and other interests. Among the principal shareholders of British Photographic Industries are MAJOR THE HON. J. J. ASTOR, VISCOUNT ASTOR and VISCOUNTESS ASTOR. The balance sheet of the company presented in December 1935, showed a net profit of £54. 6*s*. 1*d*., and the dividends on the preference shares were stated to be in arrears since July 1931.

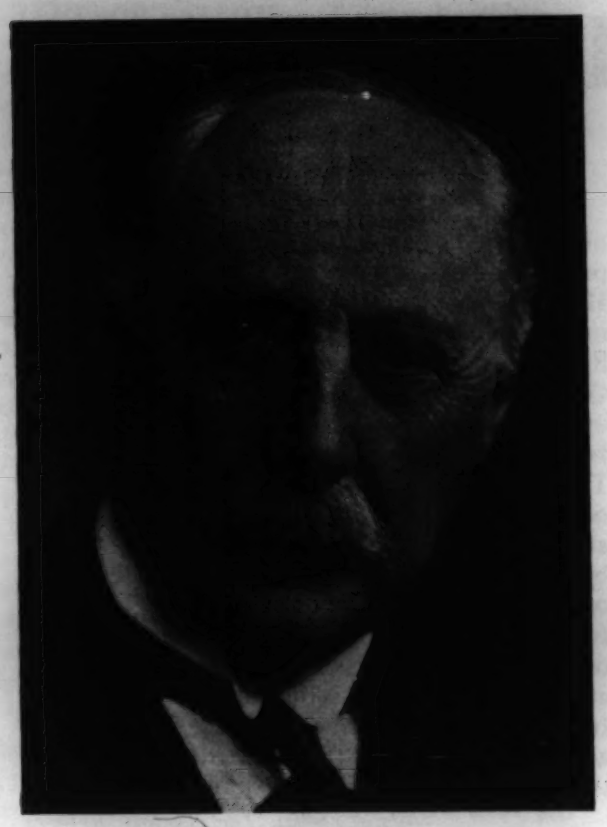
It will have been noticed that in the references to the smaller production units associated with the two Anglo-American groups, the name of Aldgate Trustees Ltd. constantly recurs as a guarantor of loans. In fact, out of a total of over £4,000,000 sunk in the production side of the film industry during 1936 this company guaranteed more than £2,900,000. Who, then, are the members of this extremely important concern?

Aldgate Trustees Ltd. is a private company registered in July 1935, with a capital of £1,000 of which £98 is paid up. Its directors are F. C. ELLS, and L. H. WILLIAMS, directors of the firm of Glanville, Enthoven & Co., Lloyd's brokers; and S. B. SMITH, a chartered accountant. We have noted that after having advanced some £233,000 to the City Film Corporation, Aldgate Trustees found it necessary to throw that concern into receivership in April 1936. The receiver appointed by Aldgate Trustees was Harold G. Judd. But we have also noted that Mr. Judd is a member of the board of Pinewood Studios, the studio enterprise closely associated with the G.F.D. interests. Moreover, among the concerns of which Mr. Judd is a director is H. J. Enthoven and Sons Ltd., lead merchants. This company appears to be largely a family concern, for the name of Enthoven appears several times in the list of its directors and shareholders. Among the latter is Mr. Frederick Vernon Enthoven, and he is also a director of Glanville, Enthoven & Co.

IT will now be clear that the meteoric expansion of British independent production during the last eighteen months has led to a financial situation bearing all the characteristics of a wildly speculative trade boom rushing towards its culmination. The great majority of the production units are private companies with rela-

STRUCTURE OF THE BRITISH FILM INDUSTRY, AUTUMN 1936

RENTERS	AMERICAN AFFILIATIONS	BRITISH PRODUCTION AFFILIATIONS	EXHIBITION AFFILIATIONS
1. American Renters:			
M.G.M.	Loews's Inc. (M.G.M.)	Various Quota prod. units	London pre-release hall
RADIO PICTURES	R.K.O. Radio	Various Quota prod. units	
WARNER AND FIRST NATIONAL	Warner & First National	Own subsidiary with studio at Teddington	
FOX FILM CO.	20th Century-Fox	Fox British, Wembley, and New World Pictures, Denham	
PARAMOUNT FILM SERVICE	Paramount Inc.	B. & D. and other Quota prod. units	12 super-halls and arrangements with Union Circuit (250 halls)
COLUMBIA	Columbia Pict. Corp.	Paul Soskin Prod. and other units	
2. Anglo-American Renters:			
UNITED ARTISTS	U.A. Corp.	London Film Prods., B. & D., Criterion, British Cine Alliance, Bergner-Czinner, Trafalgar, V. Saville Prods., Erich Pommer Prods., Garrett-Klement, Atlantic, Pall Mall, Worton Hall	Interest in Odeon Circuit and County Circuit
GENERAL FILM DISTRIBUTORS	Universal	Pinewood, B. & D., H. Wilcox Prods., Capitol, City Films, Universal-Wainwright, British National, etc.	New circuit in process of formation
3. Major British Renters:			
GAUMONT-BRITISH DISTRIBUTORS	(20th Century-Fox)	G.B. Pict. Corp., Gainsborough Pict.	G.B. Circuit. Over 300 halls
WARDOUR FILMS AND PATHE PICTURES	none	B.I.P., Welwyn, and other units	A.B.P.C. Circuit. About 290 halls
4. Other British Renters:			
ASS. BRITISH FILM DISTRIBUTORS	Grand National Films Inc.	A.T.P., and independent units	none
TWICKENHAM FILM DISTRIBUTORS (including P.D.C.)	various	Twickenham Studios, New Ideal Pict., J.H. Productions	none
BRITISH LION	Republic Corp. of America	Beaconsfield Studios, Hammer Prods.	none
EQUITY BRITISH	various	None (re-issues).	none
BUTCHER'S FILM SERVICE	various	Various independent units	none
ASS. PRODUCING AND DISTRIBUTING CO.	various	Sound City, U.K. Films and independent producers	none



Colin F. Campbell (Chairman, National Provincial Bank)

tively small capitals, the bulk of their production costs being secured by means of insurance policies against the non-payment of bank overdrafts.

But the boom has three main features peculiar to itself:

(1) It is based almost entirely on *expectation* with very little concrete results to justify the wholesale optimism. The security offered is, in nine cases out of ten, the highly problematical one of the expected returns from films about to be made or in production. At the same time, the possible insertion of a "quality clause" when the Quota Act comes before Parliament for revision this year has very probably contributed to the general expectancy.

(2) Though in the exhibition field ordinary shareholders are, on the whole, obtaining good dividends, in the production sphere they are not—even in the boom period. An analysis of the ordinary share dividends paid during the last two years reveals that of the older companies engaged solely in production, British Lion, B. & D., and A.T.P., paid nothing, while Sound City paid 3% in 1936.

(3) The expansion has, in general, not been financed by the usual procedure of increase in the capital of the companies concerned, but by a spectacular increase in *loans;* whereas in normal booms the increase in business usually enables the expanding enterprises largely to liquidate their loan obligations. In this regard, the case of the Capitol Film Corporation is interesting, for this concern has a considerably larger capital (£125,000) than most of the independent units. Yet in spite of the fact that in the case of at least four Capitol films 37½% of the production costs were guaranteed by G.F.D., the company secured during 1936 guaranteed overdrafts with the Westminster Bank of £450,000, £360,000 and £140,000, and with the District Bank of £150,000, all through Aldgate Trustees. Nor is this all, for it raised debentures and collateral mortgages for £160,000 from the Equity and Law Life Assurance Society.

It has been impossible in this report to go in any detail into the financing of the recent expansions in the exhibition field. But here also the loan method predominated until the last weeks of 1936, when the Union and Odeon circuits were reorganised by the formation of new companies with authorised capital resources of £6,500,000 and £5,000,000 respectively. In the first ten months of 1936 the gigantic sum of over £7,800,000 was secured in the form of mortgages or debentures on cinema properties. In the advancing of these vast loans the three concerns which figure most prominently are the *Law Debenture Corporation, Branch Nominees Ltd.*, and the *Equity and Law Life Assurance Society*.

The chairman of the Law Debenture Corporation is SIR MILES MATTINSON, K.C., who is also chairman of Ellerman Lines Ltd., the chief shipping company among the interests now controlled by the youthful Sir John Ellerman, heir to the £36,000,000 estate left him by his father. The parent organisation of Branch Nominees Ltd. is the National Provincial Bank, which has itself granted large credits to the film industry. The Equity and Law Life Assurance Society has financial interests covering all three spheres of the film Trade. One of its directors, MR. R. F. HOLME, is also a director of Radio Pictures and Radio-Keith-Orpheum.

Finally, we can indicate one further important characteristic of the film boom; a characteristic, moreover, common to other industries. The relative increase in loan financing is one of the most powerful agents in the trend towards ever greater concentration. In this case we have seen how the credits obtained by the various production companies increasingly tend to emanate from a few powerful financial groups, who thus obtain a degree of control overriding the competitive barriers within the industry.

John Maxwell, Chairman, Associated British Picture Corp. Ltd., Director, Gaumont-British Picture Corporation Ltd.

Sir John Ellerman

Ten years ago about nine-tenths of the feature films registered in this country were American. Since that time the British film industry has expanded with tremendous violence, financed during 1936 alone to the extent of more than twenty-four million pounds. To-day, more than two-thirds of the feature films registered in this country are still American.

In this enquiry the Film Council made extensive use of the files of the "Financial News," the "Financial Times," the "Kinematograph Weekly," the Labour Research Department, "To-day's Cinema" and the "Stock Exchange Gazette," It takes this opportunity of acknowledging its gratitude for their use.

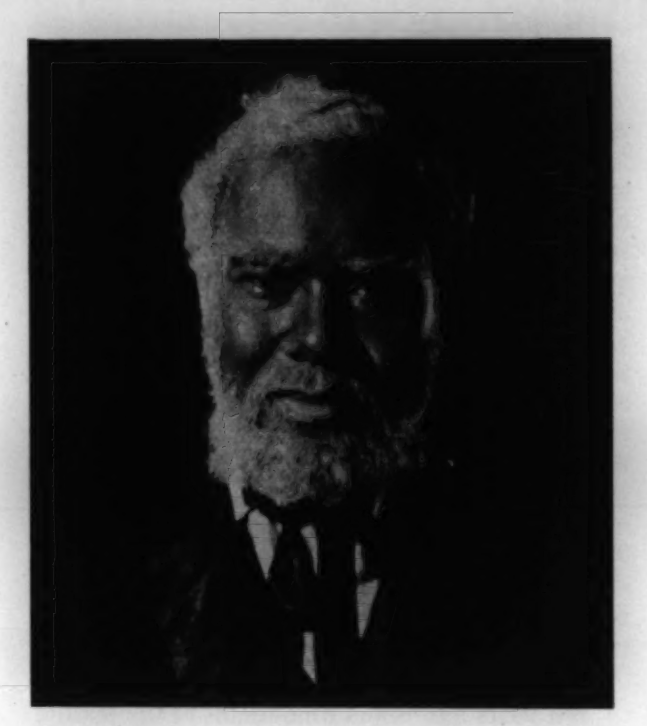
World Films News is glad to announce that Dr. F. D. Klingender, the well-known student of the social problems of art, has prepared at the suggestion of the editorial staff a course of lectures dealing with the fundamental problems touching the realist film. His lectures, which will be available for booking to film societies, will cover the following subjects:—

1. Art and Society in Modern Times: Three Lectures illustrated by about 40 lantern slides each.
   (a) Classicism, Romanticism and Realism, 1789–1870, the development of French painting from David to Courbet.
   (b) Impressionism and the three founders of Post-Impressionism, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Cezanne, 1870–1900.
   (c) The European art movements of the 20th century from Cubism to Abstract Art and Surrealism.
2. Mass Appeal: a Study of the American Film and its Public, 1903–36 (one lecture).
3. The Russian Film and its Social Background, 1917–36.

Enquiries should be addressed to the editorial office, *W.F.N.*

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

EDITED BY H. E. BLYTH



"De Lawd"

THE GREEN PASTURES. (Marc Connelly and William Keighley—Warner Bros.)

Rex Ingram, Oscar Polk, Eddie Anderson, Hank Wilson, Ernest Whitman, George Reed.

Nothing will induce me to argue about whether this picture is what is called "commercial" or not. But with my last breath I will defend its beauty, its sincerity, its nobility, and its piety. If you are interested to see a film that unquestionably has these very qualities, then see *The Green Pastures*. Lack of the commercial success of such a film could only be a criticism of the public, not of the picture. It is beside the point to discuss "acting" and "direction" of such a picture. Thanks to the nature of the coloured people, I can believe that the players lived their parts in a spirit of complete reverence. To suggest blasphemy or to say that the cinema is not the place for such a subject is to deny the divine ubiquity and simplicity which are the roots of any faith worthy of the name.

—Stephen Watts, *The Sunday Express*

If this film is allowed, the Divine Judgment cannot but fall upon this country.

—Rev. F. L. Langston

The picture is too blasphemous and shocking to contemplate.

—Admiral Sir George King-Hall

The Green Pastures is probably the best film, in the moral sense, that has ever been shown to the public in the cinema. It makes you, as children and simple people say, feel good all over. It is impeccably honest, dazzlingly simple, and enormously moving. And if it raises unsuspected questions of theology—if it sets you wondering, for instance, about your born certainty of the colour of the God-head—it strikes at nothing in faith that is real and deeply rooted. I cannot see how the most strongly sectarian of us can resent the suggestion that God, for every human being of every nation, must be comfortable, recognisable, and good.

The God of *The Green Pastures* is the God of the Negroes. He is called "De Lawd" and He is black. Dressed like a Negro preacher, and surrounded by dusky angels and archangels, He fathers a heaven that should make every Negro want to get there. It is an ornate, happy place

Review of Month

with gilded fencing and pillow-soft clouds, with swings for the cherubs, green lawns for picnicking, custards for everyone, and an enormous fish-fry.

De Lawd is kind, but He is a careful master. He keeps the heavenly accounts accurately, with the help of the Archangel Gabriel. His study is swept out daily by cleaning-angels, with checked aprons tied over their wings. And He worries, too, about the sun and the moon and the little planet called the earth, which he once made with a bit of extra firmament. And every thousand years or so He opens the golden gates and climbs down the big staircase to see how Adam and all his children are getting on down below.

The whole story is set out in the framework of a modern Negro Sunday school, and given the authority of a negro preacher's sermon to a bunch of small and wide-eyed piccanninies. Throughout the whole picture there is no white man, and no white man's point of view.

The film is admittedly a daring departure for Hollywood, even more risky than a biography of Louis Pasteur, even more dangerous than a transcript of Shakespeare or Dickens. Only two sequences in the film—the decadence of the world at the time of Noah, and a short whoopee sequence of night-club life in Babylon—have any touch about them of Hollywood influence. The rest of the film is gravely humorous, human, and reverent, beautifully annotated by the Hall Johnson Choir of Spiritual Singers, and representing a high moment in screen history. Except for that single adult passage at the close, which reconciles the Old Testament with the New, and resolves the God of Vengeance into the God of Suffering, it is a clear and simple expression of faith, seen with a child's straight vision and told in a child's pictorial language. And any film that can snatch at even the cloud and wrack of the wisdom of all the ages and present it for the understanding of a ten-year-old is surely something rather special and rare.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

LIBELLED LADY. (Jack Conway—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.)

Jean Harlow, Myrna Loy, William Powell, Spencer Tracy.

Here is the old William Powell, dynamic, debonair, never more bent on startling discovery than when he seems most at a loss. Here is the old Myrna Loy, nose deliciously tip-tilt, tongue perpetually in cheek, batting a plurality of eyelids. Here is the old Jean Harlow, practically platinum, mainly minx. And here, as always, a brand-new Spencer Tracy. For each and all of whom Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer have dished up a story of nice originality. Miss Loy plays the part of a million-heiress libelled in a newspaper edited by Mr. Tracy. Powell is the young man paid off by the newspaper to see that the libel, though untrue at the moment of printing, will certainly be true by the time he has lured Miss Loy into the crime of husband-snatching. Complications twist and twirl through the story with the happy insinuation of a fire-engine whisking through traffic-block after traffic-block. This is the year's raciest comedy. It has vim and a merry violence; it has punch and unparalleled go. Four great stars provide the punch; and you must go.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

Libelled Lady is a lark, a grand, broad, rowdy Hollywood lark. Like most larks, it goes on a bit too long, but there are not many people who will make that a cause for grumbling. There's something about a faked divorce in it, and a newspaper libel suit; but I take long odds you won't remember. What you will remember is William Powell flopping on his face in the stream, and Spencer Tracy in top-hat and shirt dressing in front of the mirror, and Myrna Loy in almost everything she does, and Jean Harlow, as a much-bartered bride, quivering like an angry dynamo in the sheerest necessities of wedding finery. I don't quite see myself how anyone who enjoys pictures as pictures is going to keep away from *Libelled Lady*, but if he does, I'm sorry for him.

—C. A. Lejeune, *The Sunday Observer*

THE PRESIDENT'S MYSTERY. (Phil Rosen—Republic.)

Henry Wilcoxon, Betty Furness, Evelyn Brent.

I think people will show by their box-office votes that they want films to deal with present social ideas, but progressively. The movies have been extending feelers in this direction. *Bullets or Ballots* went so far as to openly show a group of bankers receiving the racketeering boodle from their city's gang-ring, whereas previous films had been content with hinting at "higher-ups." *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* went so far as to prove that a millionaire who wanted to give away his money was not crazy. But *The President's Mystery* goes the whole way in making big business a villain. It shows the head of a monopolistic national canning corporation to be utterly unscrupulous in the methods which he is willing to employ to keep his system in control. Into the general social idea has been woven a snappy story of murder and mistaken identity, so that folks will know this is still a movie, and not reality. This is still a good idea as it will help toward acceptance of the film as regular stuff. Republic is to be violently congratulated for this picture.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

BULLETS OR BALLOTS. (William Keighley—First National.)

Edward G. Robinson, Joan Blondell, Humphrey Bogart, Barton MacLane.

Bullets or Ballots is another demonstration that crime does not pay any more. It is direct line of descent from *Scarface* and the lesser gangster films. But times have changed. Speak-easies have given place to pin-table saloons; bootlegging has changed to lottery promotion, and the racketeers rebuke one another for being too free with their revolvers. Robinson plays that grand old character of melodramatic fiction, the policeman who masquerades as a crook. Joan Blondell is the lone white woman in this drama of an underworld of men. There is a suggestion of a romance between her and Robinson, but it is frustrated by the death of her hero. *Bullets or Ballots* is strong and simple stuff, not as exciting as it would have been five years ago, but with plenty of suspense and a sprinking of humour. —Ian Coster, *The Evening Standard*

Eddie Robinson assured me that *Bullets or Ballots* was "good fun." He enjoyed making it more than any other. Now I could not possibly pretend that I enjoyed seeing it more than any other, and would rank it well down the list of Eddie's pictures. There are some incidental moments when the film achieves drive. The gang scenes are well done. Warners always contrive to make their killers look pictorial, But the film never succeeds in convincing; it always remains a fairy tale full of bold bad men, a political beanstalk, and Eddie Robinson as a babe in the Bowery wood.

—Connery Chappell, *The Sunday Dispatch*

W.F.N. SELECTION

The Green Pastures	***
Libelled Lady	**
Bullets or Ballots	**
The President's Mystery	*

FILMS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE

The Green Pastures
Libelled Lady
The President's Mystery
Bullets or Ballots
Dreams Come True
Don Donald
His Lordship
Come and Get It
Ramona
A Woman Rebels
Ladies in Love
The Bride Walks Out
Sabotage
Nightingale

" Bullets or Ballots."

(Courtesy 1st National)

DREAMS COME TRUE. (Reginald Denham—Reunion.)

Frances Day, Hugh Wakefield, Nelson Keys, Frederick Bradshaw.

This film is a happy adaption of the musical comedy *Clo, Clo*. Reginald Denham, one of the most intelligent of younger British film directors, has contrived to preserve the spice and spirit of the original production and to add to it lovely exterior settings of the texture we used to have when Cecil Hepworth was a director. Frances Day has better acting opportunities in her new picture than in any other British film. Her delightful singing and the natural charm with which she plays the part of the actress who sighed for the country and who was an expert farmer make this film pleasant and piquant entertainment. *Dreams Come True* has a merit rare in British films: that of not pretending to be other than it is. It has melody, comedy, romance, piquancy and honesty, and is therefore excellent light entertainment.

—Seton Margrave, *The Daily Mail*

DON DONALD. (Walt Disney.)

Donald Duck, Disney's untamable terror, fierce, fiery, worst-tempered actor on the screen, has fallen a victim to a woman's wiles! The object of his affections is called Donna. She co-stars with him for the first time in *Don Donald*, latest Disney Silly Symphony. Though this is Donna's début, she has already achieved fame as the first newcomer to the Disney studio whom Donald has not yet challenged with his notorious battle-cry: "Wanna fight?" Donald's only comment when interviewed was: "Well, you know how it is—a fellow gets kinda lonely."

—*The Sunday Referee*

HIS LORDSHIP. (Herbert Mason—Gaumont-British.)

George Arliss, Romilly Lunge, Rene Ray.

George Arliss returns to delight his admirers twice over—once as Viscount Dunchester, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and once as that Minister's twin brother, Richard Fraser, wandering humorist. How the photographer can bring these two men intimately together in the same room is one of the mysteries; but frequently meet they do, and they are not two but one. Mr. Arliss has supplied touches subtly to differentiate them; yet they are not two but one. A triumph both for actor and the notoriously truthful tense. Like everything in which Mr. Arliss appears, the story is relevant and pointed. The film is very slight but it is most adroitly presented. "Double" without any visible "toil or trouble"; double with fun and success. But I doubt if an Eastern slave would ever use the word "exonerate." —E. V. L., *Punch*

The Arliss following will feel that it has a grievance with this film. Neither the story nor the directing, nor the casting are good enough for this famous star. He needs the grandeur of authentic historical settings, with big themes, strong drama, and convincing backgrounds. In this film he gets nothing but cheap theatricality, and does not escape the reproach of adding to it himself. It is difficult to see how he could have done otherwise. It is pretentious stuff. But it would have made a wonderful farce. If Sydney Howard sees it he will lament a lost opportunity.

—*The Birmingham Mail*

COME AND GET IT. (Howard Hawks and William Wyler—United Artists.)

Edward Arnold, Frances Farmer, Walter Brennan Joel McCrea.

Astonishing settings of the lumber trade in the snow-clad forests of Wisconsin; an ambitious supervisor who jilts a young saloon singer; her reincarnation in the person of her daughter, and the rather unpalatable re-awakened passion of a middle-aged man—these are the milestones of this magnificently produced drama. As the central figure, Edward Arnold, with his burly Napoleonic presence and bass chuckle, gives the show of his career, fighting a losing battle for sympathy. Frances Farmer, in two generations, jumps at once to the front rank of beautiful, intelligent and sensitive actresses—a blend of Ann Harding and Constance Cummings. The film's moral is that log-rolling is only profitable when done literally. —P. L. Mannock, *The Daily Herald*

Loretta Young in "Ramona"

I would not say that *Come and Get It* is one of Sam Goldwyn's major successes. It opens with stirring scenes of logs being rolled down into the stream for transport to the mills. Edward Arnold is a ruthless lumber captain. He meets Lotta, an entertainer of the camp hotel, and falls for her. He falls so heavily that he starts a grand fight in the saloon, waged by means of drink trays. This is a new idea in saloon clean-ups, and I enjoyed it very much. It was a lovely smash. Arnold lets the girl down just as she has decided to go straight. Twenty years later he discovers the existence of the deceased Lotta's daughter and proceeds to indulge his impossible adoration for the pretty girl. I have nothing but praise for the acting and wish I could say the same for those who constructed the story.

—A. Jympson Harman, *The Evening News*

RAMONA. (Henry King—20th Century-Fox.)
Loretta Young, Don Ameche, Kent Taylor, Pauline Frederick.

Another Technicolour hit. Watch for the scene where Loretta Young, locked in her room, turns her head toward the window. It's one of those flashes of accidentally perfect tone-colour that come still too rarely in these films. When they are planned, rather than caught on the wing, colour will be a great expressive medium in films. *Ramona* is the third or fourth of a series of films which have shown the brutal injustice by which the white settlers stole the lush California valleys from natives who had possessed the land for generations. It's pretty safe to expose injustices when they are that far back.

—Meyer Levin, *Esquire*

Chronomatically, the picture is superior to anything we have seen in the colour line. Without striving for the splashing effects of *Becky Sharp* but deepening the "natural colour" tones of *Trail of the Lonesome Pine*, it has achieved warmth and vigour without subjecting its beholders to a constant optic bombardment. Here and there the camera men have insisted upon showing off, inserting gaudy sunsets, sunrises and glimpses of horsemen on the horizon for no other reason than to demonstrate what they could do with sunsets, sunrises and horsemen on the horizon. But generally they have been content with modest and harmonious tableaux, with tonal composition that is restful, pleasant and of definite relation to the dramatic context.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

A WOMAN REBELS. (Mark Sandrich—RKO Radio.)
Katharine Hepburn, Herbert Marshall, Elizabeth Allen.

I can never make up my mind whether Katharine Hepburn is a genius or just a contract that has to be worked out. Her constant, open-mouth smile annoys me. On the other hand now and then she gets me pulsating with emotion. Why somebody wished this dull, mid-Victorian story on her I can't guess. She meets a naval officer; immediately has a baby. Then Herbert Marshall turns up and is, oh! so annoyingly loyal and true till death. This is one of those films which (trying to be kind) I must call (with a slightly superior masculine smile) "a woman's picture." —Harris Deans, *The Sunday Graphic*

Hepburn is slipping. Bless the Little Woman, it isn't altogether her fault. Her acting is more defiantly competent, more (if I may use the word) akimbo than ever. She is still, at heart, a fresh and freckled tom-boy; an out-of-door, ingenuous land-girl. But I wish to heaven she'd get back to the land. Miss Hepburn is *not* cut out to play Great Ladies of the Past. Nor even, as on this occasion, Great Ladies with a Past. As Pamela Thistlewaite (do I scent golden opportunities for a "Knock, knock"?) she battles gamely with the exigencies of costume and a coiffure that resembles, oddly, several beehives. Mr. Marshall's acting is still perfunctory, his manners impeccable. On this occasion, however, the combination of manners and modes is not a happy one. Less happy even than the story, which is misery and melodrama run riot. I wish Miss Hepburn would make a Western.

—Paul Dehn, *The Sunday Referee*

LADIES IN LOVE. (Edward H. Griffith—20th Century-Fox.)
Janet Gaynor, Loretta Young, Constance Bennett, Simone Simon, Don Ameche.

Love and love alone is the theme of the play on which Twentieth Century has based its picture, and love and love again is the dimpled puppet-master controlling the destinies of the film's four (4) leading ladies. That, as the laconic Mr. Coolidge might have commented, is a lot of love, even though it is parcelled evenly among Janet Gaynor, Loretta Young, Constance Bennett, Simone Simon and the men in the cast. The approach to their stories is definitely that of the romantic confessional tales and, if you will pardon the liberty, these would be appropriate chapter headings: "I Loved and Lost a Count," by Miss Young; "So I Married the Doctor," by Miss Gaynor; "I Learned Too Late That You Can't Play at Love," by Miss Bennett, and "Never Take No for an Answer," by Miss Simon. Although I dread the thought of dropping an apple of discord into Hollywood's Olympus, Miss Gaynor impressed me more favourably than the Misses Young, Bennett and Simon. Edward Griffith's direction has been smooth and the entire production has a satiny texture. It's still a woman's picture.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*

Ladies in Love is a sorority meeting, in Budapest, of Janet Gaynor, Loretta Young, Constance Bennett, and Simone Simon. Without hair-pulling Miss Gaynor triumphs throughout.

—John Mosher, *The New Yorker*

THE BRIDE WALKS OUT. (Leigh Jason—RKO Radio.)
Barbara Stanwyck, Robert Young, Gene Raymond, Helen Broderick, Ned Sparks.

This is a comedy of domestic quarrels, for besides the hero and heroine there are Ned Sparks and Helen Broderick bickering all the time. I got a bit tired of so much strife, and, much as I enjoy Ned Sparks' disgruntled resignation to feminine things as they are, I had too much of him this time. Robert Young hovers about as a rich playboy who might have made quite a good mate for the girl if she had only met him before instead of just after the marriage. Personally, if I had been the producers, I would have given the girl to Robert. But then, Gene always did represent the sort of fellow I would avoid like a cold in the head.

—A. Jympson Harman, *The Evening News*

The film opens in the broad highway of sentimental romance, with Miss Barbara Stanwyck as the unwilling mannequin, who is persuaded by Mr. Gene Raymond to leave the world of business for that of matrimony, turns unexpectedly into the lively street of farce, down which Mr. Ned Sparks trundles his load of wise-

cracks, ventures momentarily into the thoroughfare of pure comedy, where Mr. Robert Young scatters money and wit, and eventually loses its way in the tortuous lane of mock heroics and real love. Had the director been bold enough to regulate the crossings and to free the film from the congested traffic of romantic verbiage he might well have succeeded in making a shorter and a more amusing film. As it is, Miss Stanwyck not only "walks out," but strolls aimlessly down each street until Mr. Young takes her back to the point from which she started.

—*The Times*

SABOTAGE. (Hitchcock—Gaumont-British)

Sabotage, Hitchcock's new film, has got the same plot as the last two or three films he has made—the same Hitchcock twists and the same ingenious construction, with the climax earlier in the film than any other director dares to put it. All this means that it is grand entertainment, and very exciting. There would be no more to say except that "Hitchcock has done it again," were it not for the fact that Hitchcock has started doing something else as well.

He has suddenly gone human, and the characters are not incidental attachments to an ingenious and thrilling script, but genuine people whose characters and reactions control, modify, and illuminate the story.

The chief character, played by Oscar Homolka, is the manager of a small cinema, and unwilling tool of a foreign power in a campaign of sabotage in London. He wants money so he does what he is told. All the incidents in the film take place as a direct result of this man's peculiar character, with its mixture of direct action and complete indecisiveness. Homolka plays the part brilliantly and Hitchcock's direction of him is even more brilliant. Sylvia Sidney, as Homolka's wife, and Desmond Tester as his wife's small brother, are equally important from the psychological point of view. Sylvia Sidney gives her best performance since Mamoulian's *City Streets*.

All through the film the typical Hitchcock touches, especially in the cockney crowd scenes, are less artificial than previously.

More than this, Hitchcock has at last got back to something which he used to possess in the old silent days, and that is the introduction of really moving and emotionally dramatic incidents. The curious thing is that these are, most of them, based on the typical Hitchcock twists; for example, the woman's small brother is killed in a bomb explosion; she discovers that her husband is entirely responsible for this. Two episodes follow; in the first she wanders into the cinema which she and her husband own, where an audience composed chiefly of children is watching Disney's *Who Killed Cock Robin?* As she watches, she begins to laugh and sits down amongst the children. At the point where Cock Robin is actually slain, a roar of laughter goes up from the children all round her, while she rises to her feet in intolerable agony; and as she leaves the cinema the voices from the screen pursue her with the words—*Who Killed Cock Robin?* Shortly afterwards, following a terrifically well directed scene during which she kills her husband, there is a shot of her going down a crowded East End street with a Scotland Yard detective (who is, of course, in love with her); Hitchcock suddenly cuts in a perfectly realistic shot of her brother running towards her through the crowd. She catches hold of her and on that movement Hitchcock cuts to the reverse angle showing her standing on the crowded pavement bewildered, her hands on the shoulders of an ordinary errand-boy. This is the best cut and best timed sequence I have yet seen in any British film.

" The Bride Walks Out "

So there it is. Hitchcock seems to be starting on a new line and an important one both for himself and his public. This film does not establish it, but it does show the possibilities. Now what is needed is for Hitchcock to scrap his thriller stories and go for something real. If he does this, the promises underlying *Sabotage* will mature into something really important for British films.

—Wright, *W.F.N.*

NIGHTINGALE. (Nikolai Ekk—Russian.)
Valentina Ivasheva, N. Kashkarova.

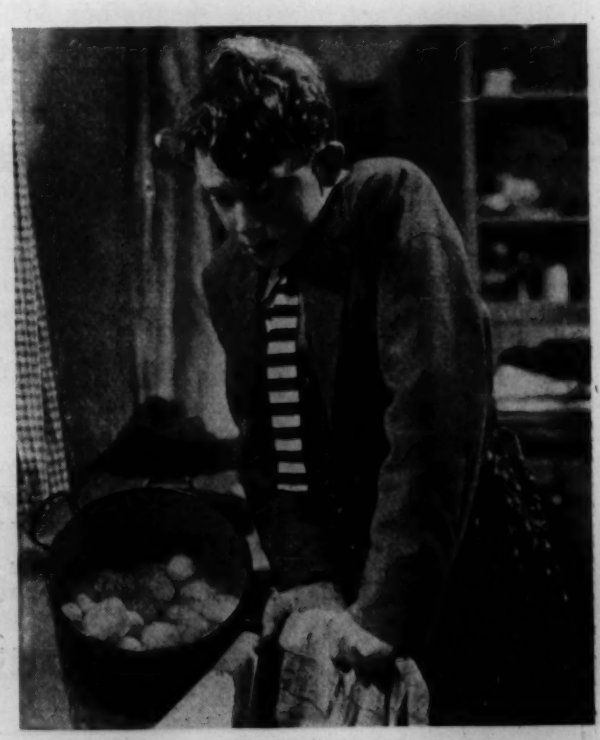
At first we were inclined to be bitter about it, but it really does not deserve one's indignation. The blunt and unpleasant fact is that *Nightingale*, the Soviet's first all-colour picture, is pretty bad. Unless you look at it through red-tinted glasses and have a Russian interpreter by your side, it is likely to bore you pink.

The picture is a rather amazing anachronism in one respect, combining that newest attribute of the cinema—colour—with an editing technique characteristic of the silent films of the pre-war era. Instead of employing superimposed dialogue titles which permit us to follow the speeches and action, it makes ceaseless use of long subtitles explaining not merely action that is to come but action that never is depicted on the screen.

Mr. Ekk's colour composition is vagrantly arresting, particularly in those scenes where he has subdued his tints to the scale just above that of ordinary black and white photography, but he has been guilty of some outrageous lithographs, and he shows himself to be overfond of portraiture. In this connection, incidentally, it might be noted that the Russian colour process is more successful than Hollywood's Technicolour in dealing with flesh tones. In general, however, it is all too obvious that the Russian colour-film still is in an experimental state. It is sharply defined one minute, blurred the next, and garish and sombre by unexpected turns.

The story proper is equally vacillating, asking consideration as a drama of pre-revolutionary Russia while containing more nonsense than we might have expected from a thorough farce. The tale, briefly, is that of the revolt of the women employees of a pottery factory after they learn that a fire which destroyed the old plant and killed several of their number had been planned by the factory owner for the insurance money.

—Frank S. Nugent, *The New York Times*



"Sabotage"

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The Breath of Reality

By G. J. CONS, *specialist member of the Geographic Committee of the Central Council for School Broadcasting.*

It is true that school broadcasts, as performances, have reached a satisfactory standard. Within the limits of good scripts, lecturers with radio personality, and static microphones, the officials may be said to have achieved a uniform level of good production.

But it is also true that most of the Committees are wedded to stereotyped courses. They follow the accepted lines of school instruction, treating the subject in hand as a branch of pure knowledge and forgetting the main function of school broadcasting.

To think of the microphone as a patent lesson-producing machine is to misapply the educational uses of radio. To substitute the spoken word for the printed text-book is to lose entry to the vivid world of sound imagery which is so important in the supplementing of classroom teaching. It is in the borderland territory where academic subjects touch on real life that the microphone can make its greatest contribution to the schools.

The Central Council has been cautious in any departure from the set courses. But a recent innovation indicates a slowly changing attitude. Two-feature programmes directed to the schools have lately been broadcast, one dealing with the herring fisheries, the other with mining. Their admittance into the programme gave promise of a new growing-point in school radio, but their treatment revealed that actuality must go a long way before it fulfils its true purpose of dramatising everyday events for the classroom.

Sound Picture of a Coal-Mine—so ran the announcement in the *Radio Times*. It was to be the most ambitious actuality broadcast yet attempted for schools. Here was an opportunity to bring the children into touch with the realities of a coal miner's life, and by a mobile microphone to fashion a living picture of the mining village, the pit head and the coal face. Such a programme should be expected to awaken in the children an imaginative experience that would tell on their lives, arousing sympathetic understanding and a greater concern for the miner's lot. For half an hour they could gain contact with the workers of one of our key industries.

But the opportunity was missed. As actuality it was a failure. It was artificial. It was done in the style of a story book that points the moral. The story was well told, the sound illustrations came in smoothly, and the moral was given emphatically at the end. But it was an attempt at a lesson on a coal mine, and was obviously prepared by one who thinks of the way in which this kind of thing is taught in schools. It gave the feeling of a nicely balanced literary description.

Even at the coal face we had the same smooth-running story, with no touch of realism. Here were the miners stripped to the waist, twisting their sweating bodies in the dim light of their lamps, the damp air, the distant boom of shots just fired, the oppressiveness of cramped space. But there was no sound record of the coal face, the supreme point in the miner's life underground. If it were too difficult to record the sounds of the pit, then, in order to give the reality of the scene, the observer's own reactions done in vivid personal terms, would have been more convincing than an ordered, make-believe story interrupted by rehearsed interviews with a deputy and a miner.

Again, the sound pictures of the surface machinery increased the impression of artificiality. For example, a verbal description of the power house was followed by sounds supporting the explanation. To give the impression of reality the sound sequences should be made an integral part of the whole; they should not be used merely as illustrations. In fashioning these actuality broadcasts for schools the producer should not copy the text-book and treat the sound sequences as of secondary importance. He must forget all about lessons. He must create the experiences of the living fact, link them together by vivid direct reporting of his own personal reactions and arrange them in convincing order.

On that level radio will take the child beyond the classroom into living contact with the real life of the community. The bane of our schools is unreality; they need to be brought into touch with the market place, the factory, the mine, the office, and with all aspects of our communal life. School broadcasting can bring the breath of reality into the classroom. Herein lies its future.

BRIDIE BACKS B.B.C.

In a recent issue of "The Star", J. B. Priestley condemned the autocratic methods of the B.B.C. He attacked the system whereby all B.B.C. speakers are required to submit manuscripts a fortnight beforehand, and to present themselves at the studio for rehearsals.

Last month we published the comments of celebrated writers and speakers on this system. All agreed with Mr. Priestley; all denounced the cramping of free speech by inflexible regulations.

We are therefore pleased to publish a comment from Mr. James Bridie, eminent Scottish playwright, upholding the B.B.C. and questioning Mr. Priestley's case. Mr. Bridie writes:

If a music hall were enterprising enough to engage Mr. Priestley it would ask for details of his turn in advance, require him to rehearse and pay him such rates as performers in his line of business were willing to accept. Why should he object when another organisation running to a strict timetable and subject to a rigorous censorship offers him the same conditions?

Firstly, because the B.B.C. is large, solemn, official and a little absurd and is easily the best whipping post in Britain.

Secondly, because Mr. Priestley is, like most successful writers, chronically a bit above himself. I can't see why a writer of story books and stage plays should demand more consideration than any other public entertainer. I can't see why, publicity apart, he should want to broadcast at all. He is an amateur among professionals.

When Mr. Priestley writes a newspaper article he is a high-grade professional. When he makes an after-dinner speech he is taking part in a purely amateur game. He happens to be a very good amateur broadcast lecturer, but that doesn't help his analogies or alter his status. The Press custom of granting high journalistic rank to distinguished pugilists, murderers and thieves is, to my mind, a bad custom. The amateur should be humble and be kept humble.

When Mr. Priestley asks how many successful writers figure in the B.B.C. programmes, I cannot answer offhand; but I have heard several of these dry-lipped, hesitant persons. I think they would all have been the better of more careful rehearsal and that, apart from Mr. Beerbohm, Mr. Shaw and Mr. Priestley himself, they compared very badly in their manner of delivery and the arrangement of their matter with the professional teachers, clergymen, actors and announcers who earn their living by talking.

JAMES BRIDIE

LEAVING THE TAP ON

A suburban fan of the gardening talks analyses the service the B.B.C. gives to the thousands like himself who don't write letters to Broadcasting House. He claims that each listener gets half-an-hour of enjoyment each week, whereas, on a percentage basis he is only entitled to two minutes.

IT'S THE SAME old trouble: we shall come to wreck upon a definition.

So let's get over that difficulty first.

Radio emits two kinds of sound: those we listen to and those we hear.

The second kind can be sub-divided into:

(*a*) Sounds that exist through indifference.
(*b*) Sounds that exist through laziness.
(*c*) Sounds that other people encourage.
(*d*) Sounds that survive.

Get a clear idea of the difference, and we go a long way towards solving that hardy perennial, "What is wrong with the Radio?"

For wireless is in the same class with Malvolio's "greatness": some are born with it, some achieve it, and some have it thrust upon them.

That's the trouble.

My village is a fast-growing London dormitory, and is as representative a self-contained community as any you'd find in England. What we like is typical: but there's the rub, what do we like?

But for one thing, I should be convinced that the B.B.C. know the answer to that very much better than any member of the community they serve. They receive thousands of letters voicing the likes and dislikes of listeners, and one would suppose that was a guide. But there's one thing that invalidates that: only some listeners write.

It would still be sufficient if the correspondents were representative, but they certainly are not. They are the vocal type—and that's a class on its own.

The man who writes letters to the Press is as well defined a type as the man who likes whisky, or the woman who attends prayer meetings. It would be a mistake to suppose the whole community—or even the majority—think as they do.

I have had the wireless for ten years, and have never written a single letter to the B.B.C. They have no idea what I like.

Yes, the retort is obvious: but there are hundreds of thousands like me, and to say the B.B.C. don't know—and don't care—what all those listeners want would be untrue.

The B.B.C. have to cater for about seven million people, of which the great majority are able to listen only in the evenings—say, from 7 till 11 p.m. Four hours a night, or about thirty hours a week.

Those seven millions have every conceivable kind of human interest. Some like sport; some want poetry; others are interested in nothing but gardening or Norman architecture. Some even like dance music. It is difficult to understand the tastes of other people, but we know they exist, and that's the main thing. Even those that like sport probably have one particular sport—racing, football or cricket, or the throwing of a pretty dart, to the exclusion of all others.

If you classified your seven million into a thousand different groups, each group would still be too large for any type of programme to be ideal for all in it. Even so, each group would be entitled only to one thousandth of the thirty hours; that is to say, to a programme lasting 1 minute 48 seconds.

So that no listener has any cause to grouse if he gets each week an item that really pleases him lasting a couple of minutes.

It is fair to say that by a miracle of compromising, each listener actually gets at least a half-an-hour's first-class entertainment.

This is the half-hour's entertainment we listen to: much of all else that is broadcast comes into the second category—sounds that we merely hear.

The one big defect of wireless is that it is available all the time. This is an astonishing charge, seeing that one may switch the receiving set off whenever the programme is not wanted.

Unfortunately, we don't.

Having heard the item we wanted, the set is left on and the rest of the evening is spent to a background of weather report, condensed musical comedy, poetry readings, a debate on growing vegetable marrows, and music by the cubic mile. Some of these sounds are tolerated because they might as well be there as not; others, more actively obnoxious, are suffered merely because of the bother of getting up to switch off the set.

Our own fault entirely, of course, and therefore no sense of resentment is engendered. But it is very different with those two other categories—the Sounds that Other People Encourage, and the Sounds that Survive.

The next house to mine has one of those wireless sets that can reach out to the far ends of the earth, and bring in anything that is broadcast at any time, from anywhere. To do this, it has to be highly selective; and to be highly selective, it necessarily suffers from a lamentable deficit of top notes. I don't know what the neighbours hear, but I hear the bottom half of all that comes through.

Twenty years ago, campaigners regarded drink as the one form of intemperance calling for combat. To-day, listening in has definitely become a form of intemperance. That next-door set is on before I leave for business; and, I am assured, it is on all day. I know it is on all day on Sunday, because I hear it all over the garden while I am trying to put into effect the latest B.B.C. advice on vegetable marrows.

So, in answer to the question, "What do you listen to?" I reply: "That." Most of the infernal stuff comes from a foreign station that has a sort of fanfare call sign; and the sound of that fanfare will haunt me through the misty mid-regions of the Styx and the ghoul-haunted woodlands that lie beyond. It is said that one of the most exquisite tortures requires one drop of water to follow another, dropping on the same place. That perpetually perpetrated fanfare has a like effect.

Finally, there are the sounds that survive. These consist largely of resonances. They are the accentuated sounds of distant sets; and you can hear them from afar off, long after distance has obliterated all other emissions: throaty sounds for ever limited to one note.

My own set is a first-class affair that brings in only the National and London Regional stations. I said it was a first-class set—and I ought to know, because I designed and made it myself, and so nothing can expect to be more satisfactory. It is sufficiently good to convince me that the B.B.C. broadcast is, technically, magnificent.

A great many listeners do not know how good the broadcast is—and that is one of the chief reasons why they so bitterly dislike some of the material performed.

Take, for instance, chamber music.

Most listeners lump all chamber music together, under one heading, whether it was composed by the joyous Haydn, or the aggressive Bartòk. Naturally. Thanks to the intervention of their set, the music probably sounds much less like a string quartette than a duet between two flutes—the bass having been lost in the loudspeaker, and the upper partials amid the stray capacities.

I like the B.B.C. programmes. Sometimes for whole evenings there is not a single item that I want to hear. But I have plenty of other things to do—as I had before wireless was invented. If I were given the task of preparing the programme for a day, I am certain I could not devise a better programme that I should find on at least one day of the seven—I might concentrate into it a higher proportion of the things I personally wanted to hear, but for balance and catholicity of taste my best effort would be no better than the B.B.C.'s average. Anyone who thinks they could do better would find it an amusing experiment to try it, and submit the effort to friends at home and at the office. The volume of criticism and abuse would surprise them.

Personally, I listen to Marjory Hayward's quartet, the Proms, the children's hour, and talks on the political situation abroad, in that order. Some years ago, the children's hour was better entertainment than it is now—there was just a

Review of Year's Broadcasting

Development of "Feature" Programmes
High-Spots of the Year

By GEORGE AUDIT

During 1936 the B.B.C. gave its "Feature" Programme section the status of a Department. That is technically a most important development, and as a result Feature productions have travelled a great way since the Christmas Day programme a year ago.

May Day, *Gallipoli*, and *March of the* '45 were conspicuous successes and should certainly be repeated. Each worked out a style and a technique for presenting its own type of subject. *May Day*, making use of contemporary songs and comments and reconstructed incidents, presented the story of May Day from an early Pagan rite to the modern Labour demonstration. The St. George's Day, Empire and Christmas Day programmes should have been similarly constructed. Instead they were a jumble of speeches and quotations, without time sequence, without inter-connection, and consequently lifeless. I have never *seen* any radio setting so vividly as I did in the *Gallipoli* programme. Music, declamation, contemporary description all bent themselves to the job of making you feel the battle.

A few weeks later they produced *Kitchener*. It was written by a good historian, Mr. Temperley, in the manner of the historical novel, and for that very reason it failed miserably. Radio cannot borrow a technique. Radio is one thing; the novel is another.

A too-close imitation of documentary film technique was the undoing of *Underground*. Considering its tradition, it was ambitious of the B.B.C. to attempt a programme showing the whole life and working of London's Underground railways. But they attempted too much in trying to make the listener see the whole railway system as a single entity, like a map.

Two recent productions of Gilliam's deserve honourable mention: *Battleship*, a picture of a day's life on board a British dreadnought, and *Television*. His handling of so difficult a subject, when the B.B.C. Controller had already welcomed this new medium with faint praise, had a touch of expertness. It is something to make the television announcers and engineers talk about the limitations of their medium at an official opening in the presence of the P.M.G.

Of the big Outside Broadcasts last year the Petersen-McAvoy fight, the Cup Final, the Darts Championship, the maiden voyage of the *Queen Mary*, the Olympic Games commentaries, the National and the Derby, and the Lewis-Harvey and Foord-Neusel fights are best remembered. Often the least ambitious were the most successful. The last ten throws in the Darts final got you right on to your toes, while the Olympic commentaries were often unintelligible. Anybody who heard the Petersen-McAvoy fight will remember the excellent commentary by the Canadian journalist, Bob Bowman. None of the English commentators have the same friendly tone, the same eye for significant details and the same painstaking methods.

The last twelve months have also seen developments in the news service. It is not an easy matter to hold attention for twenty-five minutes with items of raw news. John Coatman has not only managed to do that but has also improved the quality and accuracy of his service. His practice of including short descriptive talks on topical events, and occasionally an eyewitness account is a valuable contribution to public information. There have been serious lapses on occasions like the death of King George, the early days of the Spanish War and the Constitutional crisis last December when reporting has been either excessive or inadequate. But responsibility for this rests in higher quarters than the News Department.

The B.B.C. are planning a special film of *How Christmas is Spent all over the Empire*. For the purpose of this film, which is to be televised on Christmas Day, Major E. G. Barbrack is ransacking film libraries for cuttings suitable to construct the film on how Christmas Day is celebrated in all parts of the British Empire.

Leaving the Tap On (cont.)

little more naiveté about it. My eldest child (aged six) never pays the slightest attention to the children's hour. In fact, the wireless appears to be much too abstract to command her interest at any time. Possibly adults like it for the same reason that they like *Alice in Wonderland*—because "the world is too much with us."

I have cross-examined my friends, and I find there is not an item that has not some fan. The second violin in our quartette listens to the football results—than which it is difficult to imagine anything more dull. He has to negotiate with his family when one of the programmes has a symphony, and the other has a variety hour, as to which should be tuned in; although why anybody should want to listen to variety I can only conceive by a process of abstract logic. My wife (to my surprise) likes the debates. Among the most widely popular items I believe would be found such things as the Trial of the Flitch and that bear-garden debate broadcast a few months ago, called the War of the Roses. Plays command too much attention: they should be prepared for by stoking up the fire, lighting the pipe, and putting every rival activity aside. And time is too urgent for that.

I spend my summer holiday in the loneliest part of England I can find—without the wireless. It is with the friendly feeling, when I get back, that I turn it on to the first item that happens along: there is something cheerful about the B.B.C. that appeals in itself, irrespective of what the programme happens to be.

But next door they have a set that brings in the Continental stations. And when, following that infernal fanfare, I'm told I shall hear "Caro Mio Ben" by the enterprise of Pink Pills Ltd. (these beautifully coloured pills are guaranteed to cure all irritation of the scalp, constipation and pimply skin—to be obtained from any chemist—ask for *Pink* pills)—I feel that Fleming, the genius who invented the valve, has given civilisation a real stab in the back.

B.B.C. Events

Friday, Jan. 1st, 8.30 a.m.: Third Test Match. Commentary from Melbourne. NATIONAL. 4.0 p.m.: *The Four Winds*. New Year's Day in the four corners of the earth. Production: Pudney. REGIONAL. 7.30 p.m.: Lauri Wylie's Wireless Puppets. Production: Kester. NATIONAL.

Saturday, Jan. 2nd, 7.30 p.m.: *In Town Tonight*. Production: Hanson. NATIONAL.

★Sunday, Jan. 3rd, 5.35 p.m.: *Much Ado About Nothing*. Shakespeare. Production: Creswell. NATIONAL.

Monday, Jan. 4th, 9.35 p.m.: *Money with Menaces*. By Patrick Hamilton. Production: Sieveking. NATIONAL.

Tuesday, Jan. 5th, 7.50 p.m.: Carroll Levis and his Discoveries. NATIONAL.

★Wednesday, Jan. 6th, 9.20 p.m.: *Twelve Months Back*. A Review of 1936. Production: Gilliam. NATIONAL.

Thursday, Jan. 7th, 9.0 p.m.: *Snapdragon*. A burlesque pantomime by Ashley Stern and A. A. Thomson. REGIONAL.

★Saturday, Jan. 9th, 8.55 p.m.: *Figaro*. Act 2. From Sadler's Wells. REGIONAL.

★Sunday, Jan. 10th, 9.5 p.m.: *Lady Windermere's Fan*. Wilde. Production: Gielgud. NATIONAL.

Monday, Jan. 11th, 7.20 p.m.: *Entertainment Parade*. Production: Watt. NATIONAL. ★8.30 p.m.: *Man of Destiny*. Shaw. Production: Burnham. REGIONAL.

Wednesday, Jan. 13th, 7.45 p.m.: Symphony Concert. Conductor: Malcolm Sargent. NATIONAL.

Thursday, Jan. 14th, 9.30 p.m.: Harringay *v.* Resident Canadians. Ice Hockey. Commentary. REGIONAL.

Friday, Jan. 15th, 8.0 p.m.: Music from the Movies. NATIONAL. 9.40 p.m.: *Invitation to the Waltz*. Production: Maschwitz. NATIONAL.

Saturday, Jan. 16th, 2.20 p.m.: England *v.* Wales. Rugger. Commentary from Twickenham. NATIONAL.

Sunday, Jan. 17th, 7.20 p.m.: Feature Programme. *American Humour*. NATIONAL.

Monday, Jan. 18th, 7.30 p.m.: *The Runaways*. Eden Phillpotts. REGIONAL. 8.45 p.m.: Snooker Match. Davis *v.* Lindrum. Commentary from Coventry. REGIONAL.

Tuesday, Jan. 19th, 7.45 p.m.: Liverpool Philharmonic Society Concert. Bruckner, Sibelius, Mozart, Vaughan Williams; conductor, Wood. REGIONAL.

Wednesday, Jan. 20th, 8.0 p.m.: *Bianca*. Musical Drama. Production: Kester. REGIONAL.

Thursday, Jan. 21st, 9.0 p.m.: *Scrapbook for* 1922. Production: Brewer and Baily. REGIONAL.

Friday, Jan. 22nd, 4.0 p.m.: *Butter wouldn't suit the Works*. Programme about clocks. Production, Pudney. REGIONAL. 7.30 p.m.: Feature Programme: *Shepherd's Meet*. REGIONAL.

Sunday, Jan. 24th, 9.5 p.m.: Feature Programme. *Doctor Johnson*. Production: Felton. NATIONAL.

Monday, Jan. 25th, 8.30 p.m.: Burns' Anniversary Programme. REGIONAL. 9.35 p.m.: *Twenty Years After*. Dumas. Production: Creswell. NATIONAL.

Tuesday, Jan. 26th, 8.0 p.m.: *A Southern Maid*. Musical Comedy. NATIONAL.

Wednesday, Jan. 27th, 8.15 p.m.: Concert from Queen's Hall. Conductor: Boult. NATIONAL.

Thursday, Jan. 28th, 8.15 p.m.: ★Royal Philharmonic Society Concert. Mozart. Conductor: Beecham. REGIONAL.

Friday, Jan. 29th, 8.20 a.m.: Fourth Test Match. Commentary from Adelaide. NATIONAL. 8.20 p.m.: *Paradise Island*. Hawaiian Feature Programme. REGIONAL.

Saturday, Jan. 30th, 8.50 p.m.: Act 2 *Barber of Seville*. From Sadler's Wells. REGIONAL.

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The Empire Film Library was inaugurated by H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester in 1935. Film productions of the late Empire Marketing Board and G.P.O. Film Unit are available in this Library for loan to schools and for approved displays by adult societies.

Recent additions include a number of 16 mm sound-on-film subjects dealing with scenery and wild game in the Empire.

For Catalogue (price 3d.) and forms of application for films, apply to:

The Secretary, EMPIRE FILM LIBRARY, IMPERIAL INSTITUTE, LONDON, S.W.7

PEOPLE WITH PURPOSES

Amateurs Can Perform Great Public Service says John Grierson

MANY organisations are to-day interested in propaganda by film. The Government gave an authoritative lead eight years ago when it set up the E.M.B. Film Unit, but, before then, some of the big industrial companies like United Dairies and Dorman Long had made a beginning. To-day more than a hundred of the great industries and Government departments are making films. A new brand of film producer has arisen. These film producers of the quickly developing non-theatrical cinema include firms like Beechams and Amami, interests like Gas, Electricity and the Railways, towns like Brighton, counties like Lancashire and national organisations like the Travel Association.

These people have a great deal of money at their disposal for propaganda purposes—some of them hundreds of thousands of pounds a year—and they are not likely to come to the amateurs for their films. A few have their own production units—for example the G.P.O. Film Unit, the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau, the Travel Association Film Unit and the Shell Film Unit. Most of them get their films made through specialist film producers like Gaumont-British Instructional, Strand Films, Publicity Films, Revelation Films, and others.

But the amateur will soon be playing a huge part in this field. Every year a great number of requests for advice come to me and they come from people who have not got the resources of the big groups but have nevertheless important messages which they wish to convey by film to the public. Hospitals want to tell about their work and appeal for money. Education authorities want to make local films to fit into their curriculum. Causes like the National Trust and the Council for the Preservation of Rural England need increased support and must tell their story if they are to get it. These industries, towns, causes and organisations which lack money and have only their own excellence to recommend them, are the opportunities of the amateur. The professional cannot help them because he would cost more than they can afford and the professional minimum of say two hundred pounds is in many cases out of the question. But give as little as fifty pounds to the amateur and he will work wonders.

I would like to see amateurs all over the country searching out and finding these fifty pound opportunities. Local authorities and social causes of all sorts need their help and could provide enough money to work with comfortably under amateur conditions. The amateurs could be the greatest production group in the country—making as many as a thousand serious films a year—if this alliance with local work and social service were effected.

This is not, after all, just a dream of mine. It is on a small scale a present reality. The partnership between the amateur and the local authority has already been struck. It has grown spontaneously from the need for propaganda by film, the civic ardour of many amateurs and the financial limitations of the authorities concerned. The Glasgow Education Committee has a film unit which has done excellent work in the production of classroom films. The films are shot and edited by the teachers themselves. In Edinburgh a really fine amateur—Kirkness—is following the Glasgow example and setting up a production group for the local schools. In Preston a bargain was struck between a local amateur group and a local industrial undertaking. I have seen many valuable amateur films made under similar circumstances, sometimes financed privately, in many cases financed by the organisation involved. Films of industry like *Cement*, which last year won the Savile Cup and the film on *Forestry*, which this year won the I.A.C. award—films of hospitals and surgical operations—films describing the work of schools and films describing political and social issues. At Liverpool the Tatler Cinema runs a local amateur newsreel on 16 mm.

It is nonsense to say that this public work is too great a responsibility for amateurs. The quality of amateur films to-day is very high indeed and at its best not very different from professional. I was astonished last year when I adjudicated the entries at the Glasgow Amateur Film Festival, by two facts. The first was that a large proportion of the films represented a serious contribution to public education. The second was that all the amateurs concerned had long passed the back-garden stage of development, had learned to photograph and were learning to edit—and that they were in fact really and truly concerned with the making of *film*.

Recently I have been trying to mobilise some aid for this important new movement. Professional directors have been asked if they would be willing to help amateurs in the production of these public interest films. The idea is that I, for example, would make myself available to say the Maidstone or Edinburgh group, help with scenarios if I am wanted, give a hand in cutting if I am wanted and, in general, make myself as useful as possible. This indeed I would gladly do and for nothing—so long as the films are not personal and back-garden efforts but honest efforts in local welldoing. Already a dozen other professional directors have expressed their willingness to join me in the offer.

I have heard only one word against this plan for amateurs. I have heard one professional say: "Why should we help the Amateurs? Why should they make films for educational authorities and public organisations? They will be making films which might otherwise come to us." This is a silly and short-sighted reaction. It is silly because it is only the amateur that can use those small fifty-pound sums of the less wealthy organisations. It is short-sighted because the amateurs will do much to make public interests film-conscious; and as they learn to use films they will almost certainly want to use them more ambitiously.

Well, there is my plan and I know that many amateurs over the country will agree with it. After all, I am only asking amateurs to take themselves seriously as film workers—and what amateur does not want to turn his hobby into an instrument of public usefulness?

Broadcasting in Cinemas

Western Electric announce that they have made arrangements with the Relay Services Association, whereby broadcasts can be relayed in cinemas equipped with Western Electric sound.

There has lately been a growing demand to relay in cinemas and in the majority of theatres this has meant coupling up radio relay services or wireless sets to the sound equipment. Owing to the large variety of wireless sets considerable difficulty has been encountered in making a satisfactory hook up.

Western Electric engineers and the radio relay engineers have now devised protective apparatus which entirely eliminates any possibility of indirect electrical interference from the relay service with the sound equipment. The Radio Services Association, whose address is 23 Bedford Row, W.C.1, will be glad to put exhibitors in touch with local relay companies, who will give them full particulars of the new arrangements.

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Write or telephone to-day for your tickets for the special screening of 10 outstanding 1936 publicity and propaganda films, at the Palace Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.1, at 3 p.m. on Thursday, January 14th, 1937.
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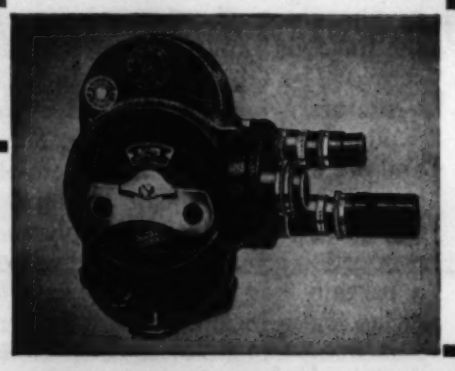

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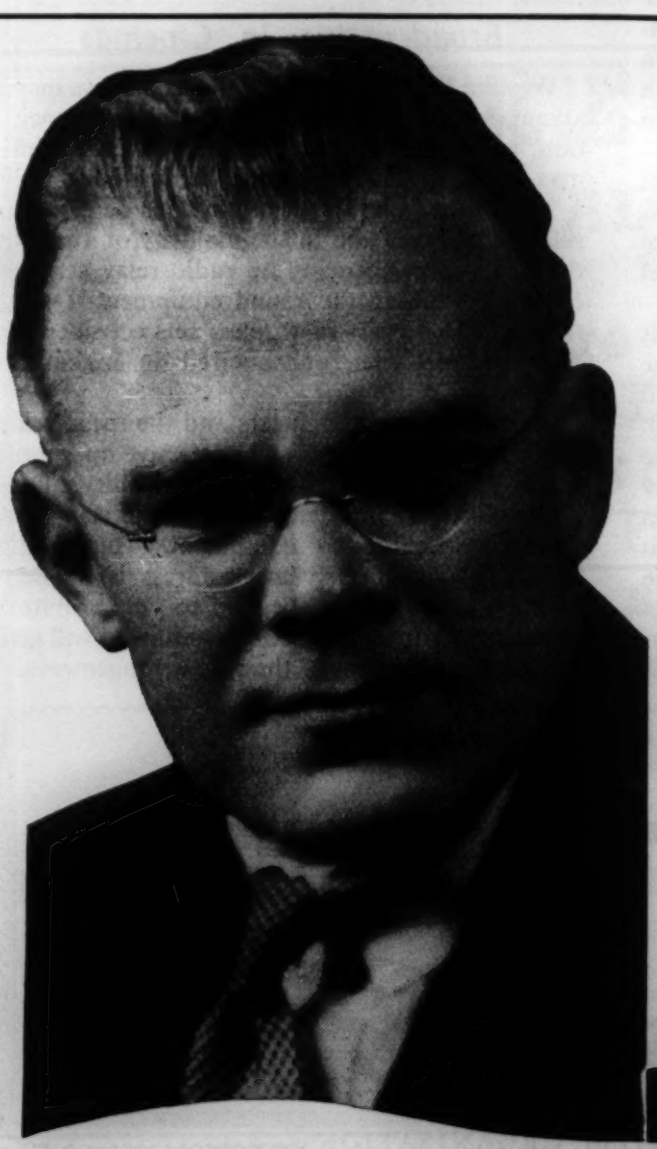

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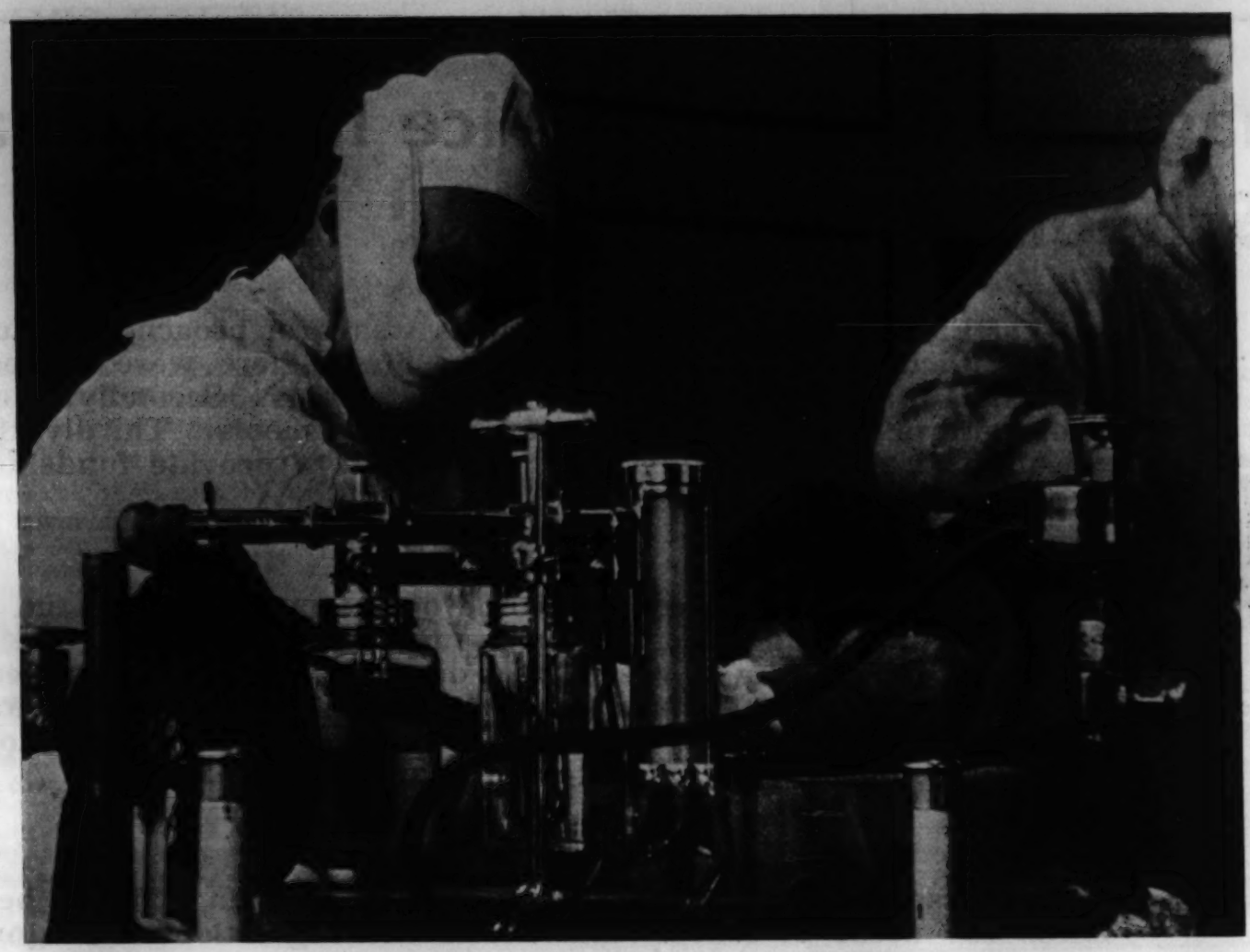

"Key to Scotland" (*Strand*)

In the Hands of the Doctor

"There are an infinite number of ways in which cinematography can be of use in medical research"

Says Peter Gorer

A FEW YEARS AGO I was present at the semi-private showing of a film of a Cæsarian operation. As a thriller the film was an undoubted success (several women fainted) but its scientific value was considerably less than that of the Surrealist film that followed. Cæsarian operations are frequently performed; anybody with a professional interest in them can see them in the flesh as often as they wish. There are special cases in which films of surgical operations can be very useful, but surgical skill can only be obtained by surgical practice, and in general such films are simply shockers.

There are of course an almost infinite number of ways in which a cinematograph can be useful to research workers or teachers, but for present purposes we may confine ourselves to three types in which the cinema appears useful.

The first is the analysis of movements too rapid to be analysed by ordinary methods. The use of the slow motion camera is too well known to require much amplification. We may point out that for certain types of biological problem this method is unsuitable because many cells and organisms are unable to withstand the intense illuminations necessary.

The antithesis of the above problem is the analysis of processes *too slow* to be followed continuously. It was the work of the late R. G. Canti in this field that did so much to popularise the cinema in biological research. For the first time it was made possible to follow the changes in form of cells from human brain tumours and to gain some idea of the life cycle of an ultra microbe. It is not possible to give a list of the problems for which Canti's technique has and can be used. Unfortunately the apparatus is bulky and comparatively costly. Doubtless, in time such apparatus will become part of the standard equipment of any up to date institute.

The third type of problem is that of recording events difficult to repeat. It is probably necessary to make the above statement clear by means of examples. Films were made of various cases of shell shock in which there were disorders of movement. Some of these showed interesting similarities to certain well-known nervous diseases of organic origin. Thanks to the cinema we shall be able to compare the neuroses of the last war with those of the next.

Some years ago the cinema could have settled a scientific controversy. It was discovered in this country that the secretion of digestive juices by the pancreas was controlled by a chemical substance that circulated in the blood. Ivan Pavlov (of conditioned-reflex fame) maintained that stimulation of certain nerves could also cause the secretion. This statement was disbelieved for many years because only Pavlov and one or two of his pupils were able to perform the experiment. Others have now acquired the technique, but it is in cases such as this that a cinematograph record would be invaluable.

The cinema is beginning to be used for teaching purposes in medical schools. One of its principal uses will be the demonstration of experiments that are difficult to show frequently. In these cases the students are not expected to be able to perform the experiments; it is merely desirable that they should see the results.

Recently I saw such a film demonstrating the physiology of the brain. The experiment requires a considerable amount of technical skill and is fairly costly to perform. Good though this film was, one could not help thinking how much better it might have been with a few technical improvements which would have suggested themselves at once to any experienced camera man. The animal upon which the experiment was performed was placed on a white background when one of black velvet could have been used and would have shown up certain movements very much better; for certain purposes close-ups would have been very advantageous and the camera not always in perfect focus.

For the most part scientists will probably wish to make their own films, whether these be for teaching or research. The experienced teacher knows just which features of a given experiment he wishes to accentuate but he may not know the best way to do so. Alternatively a research worker may wish to have a cinematograph record of some particular process but may not wish to spend a great deal of time and money on learning how to make a film. For both these problems an experienced technician would be invaluable.

A magnificent Film Service now available for Schools—

WHEN the use of Films in Schools was first broached, a number of difficulties had to be overcome. First, there were comparatively few films really suitable for use in schools. Secondly, the cost of projectors placed them beyond reach of most schools. Thirdly, there was the difficulty of persuading local authorities to provide funds for either projectors or films.

FILMS

The first difficulty has been overcome by the publication of the comprehensive list of educational films issued by Educational and General Services. These films, which are drawn from many sources, cover Geography, History, Nature Study, General Science, Physiology, and Handicraft, and can be fitted into a scheme of work for any type of school. They can be purchased outright or hired at moderate fees.

PROJECTORS

By universal agreement the 16 mm. film has been adopted because it fulfils the needs of schools and meets the regulations that govern the exhibition of films in schools. Projectors have been produced by a large number of manufacturers at a wide range of prices, some for sound, some for silent films, and others for both. It is also possible to secure a projector for use with both 16 mm. and 9.5 mm. films.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE SCHOOLS SOLVED

Until now the real problem has been the expense of installing suitable equipment, but this difficulty has been considerably minimised by the subscription scheme for films and equipment which has been devised by Educational and General Services of which full particulars will be sent on application.

E.G.S. give unbiased advice to any school with regard to the best apparatus and how to secure a really first-class installation. They will give free instruction for operating the machines so that the best results are obtained and will supply a regular programme of films, silent or sound, to suit the particular needs of the school. All E.G.S. films have been made by the Teaching Profession for the Teaching Profession for inclusion in the school curricula.

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WEST HAM'S YOUTH WANT SNAP & ACTION

IN THE PLAISTOW ROAD, among the grey wastes of West Ham, there is a little cinema called the "Endeavour."

It is the only cinema run entirely for children in London and is a commercial proposition, paying its way out of the twopences and threepences of its patrons. Miss Doris Hilditch is its pioneer owner. She took it over about a year ago when the building of super cinemas in the district had left it derelict.

At first she showed only silent films, but the children demanded talkies and got them. The house has been crowded for most performances ever since.

A great deal of its popular success is due to the sympathetic management of Mr. Harvey and to the local knowledge of his right-hand man, young Ronnie Woods, the re-winding boy. Ronnie was a regular patron who, wanting a job when he left school, was snapped up at once as a likely lad, one whose personal contacts in the district would be invaluable.

Visiting the Endeavour the other day I found that he and Mr. Harvey are in close touch with their audiences and know just what films and stars are liked and why.

"The children are very discriminating," said Mr. Harvey, "often more so than their parents, as they are not led away by preconceived ideas and glamour, but demand good straightforward stories put across quickly and snappily. They come and discuss the pictures with me and often criticise them most acutely."

"Do they take an interest in what's coming and decide whether to see it or not?"

"Indeed they do. We throw the names of coming attractions on the screen each performance. A small boy came to me with a worried face one day and said, 'When are you going to put on that film you are always mentioning, "Chocolates may be had from the attendants"? I think it sounds a good one!'

"The stills outside bring in the children, too. They study them for ages, then come and ask me about them. The girls flock in for musical and romantic films. *Mrs. Wiggs* went down marvellously with them. The boys come for comedy and adventure. *Bengal Lancer*, *Treasure Island*, *Home on the Range*, are what they like. Cowboys are rather stale now, but pirates are the thing. They like films with other boys in them—Jackie Cooper and Mickey Rooney are great favourites. Also the broad comedians, Laurel and Hardy, Schnozzle, W. C. Fields, Leslie Fuller, the Marx Brothers, and Joe E. Brown.

"Boys and girls alike love *Our Gang* comedies, while *Emil and the Detectives* had record houses. We are getting hold of it to show again. For our Christmas holidays programme we are having *Captain Blood*, which will fetch all the boys, and Shirley Temple's *Bright Eyes* for the girls. But boys like Shirley very much, too, which is surprising in a way. I believe popular sentiment has a lot to do with it. They hear their parents rave about her, and such admiration is infectious."

"Racing subjects are very popular—probably because racing is a great interest in this part of the world. Newsreels on the other hand are merely tolerated; they don't mean much to the children. *Silly Symphonies* have as much drawing power as the feature, and we always bill them as big."

"Environment has a lot to do with the children's attitude to what they see. . . ."

"Yes, it does. I overheard two boys talking about a scene in which an empty charabanc ran away down the hill. 'It's empty,' said one; 'No, it's full of invisible men,' said the other, 'and they're standing up hanging on to the straps as hard as they can.' "

"How long are your programmes?"

"Only one and a half to two hours. They get restless and bored if they have to sit still any longer. We show a feature, newsreel, cartoon and interest film—probably from G.B. Instructional. If they don't suspect they are being 'educated' they love such films, don't they, Ronnie?"

"Yes, for one thing there may be something to do with their hobby in them . . . trains or flying or something. I like these films if they aren't too long."

"Do the same children come in to see a film more than once?" I asked.

"Many times, if they like it," answered Mr. Harvey. "And we have a few old ladies who come several days a week as a regular thing. I think they find the young laughter and excitement infectious."

"Are they allowed in without a child in attendance?"

"Of course. . . ."

WINIFRED HOLMES

"A Business not a Crusade"

Exhibitor suggests a practical solution to problem of entertainment films for children

Kenneth Nyman

in an address given at the Film Institute's Conference

I RUN SPECIAL shows catering for some 1,600 to 2,000 children weekly. I did not find them consistently profitable until by experiment I arrived at a rough formula for the programmes. The children are very poor and come from the L.C.C. schools in Bethnal Green, Notting Hill and Commercial Road, and their ages are from 7 to 11. I shall continue these performances as long as they remain profitable. If I can improve the standard of the shows and maintain the attendances, well and good. But if I am to be persuaded I ought to modify the type of programmes to include, say, religious, uplift or educational films, then I am not interested and refuse to take the onus of moral, social or educational work; it is not my job and I am not paid for it. I stress this purely commercial aspect deliberately although it may sound sordid. Alistair Cooke, the B.B.C. critic, said recently: "Movies are a business, not a crusade."

Films not desirable for programmes such as I run are: "A" certificate films; features longer than one hour (the ideal length is 45 to 50 minutes); anything which is a reminder of a school lesson, e.g. *Rhodes of Africa* or *Livingstone*; films that depend on a good deal of singing (opera or jazz) or on spectacular back-stage sets. Films of the classics are not necessarily good children's entertainment because they are the classics, nor are films in which action is subservient to dialogue. The appeal must be visual and not aural. (I am sure the notable fall in children's attendances when silent films learned to speak was a case of cause and effect.) Society dramas and films in which child actors are namby-pamby or girlish and wear Victorian or old-fashioned clothes (e.g. Little Lord Fauntleroy) are also unsatisfactory.

Fairy stories are not generally popular with children. Pictures of ogres, giants, skeletons and 'big bad wolves' seen and heard so realistically are more frightening than entertaining. Love stories are of little interest and jungle or travel films should be avoided.

In my opinion Disney's Silly Symphonies are wasted on child audiences. Mickey Mouse cartoons may be the ideal example of what adults think children ought to like, but as genuine child entertainment they are over-rated. Certain of the cartoon characters are certainly appreciated; among them, Donald Duck, Oswald the Rabbit and Popeye the Sailor. The Disney subtleties pass over the heads of children and his preoccupation with enormous spiders, ogres, etc., frighten, while his Rabelaisian moments convey little or nothing to them.

As for short films, it is best to avoid silents as the present-day youngster is quite bewildered by what to him is the odd technique and miming of the silent film. In my opinion children do not understand Chaplin even though they yell at his antics.

The most popular films for children are full of action and have as basic themes heroism and achievement. They like films about bridge builders, aeroplane pilots, police heroes, firemen, railway drivers, cowboys, daredevil motorists, acrobats and boxers. Sure winners are animal pictures and they like circus, rodeo or Western subjects.

These remarks prefaced a paper read by Kenneth Nyman, chairman of the London and Home Counties Branch of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association at the recent Conference on films for children organised by the British Film Institute.

The conference was called to discuss a practical basis for a service of entertainment films suitable for children. Many members of the trade and of educational and social service bodies were present. Mr. Nyman suggested that a big film organisation controlling technical, renting and theatre facilities should undertake the assembly or six experimental programmes and that these programmes should be submitted to and approved by eminent psychologists, educational authorities and sociologists. The programmes should then be made available for showing. He pointed out that if such showings were encouraged by schools, run on a commercial basis and followed up by capable investigators, much would be learned about the type of programmes to aim at, and the economics of running children's matinees.

Eleven-Year-Old Chain-Smokers!

Paris Children's Cinema by Patricia Hutchins

SPECIAL FILM SHOWS for children have so far been left to private initiative in France. How much the State will do to organise children's cinemas lies in the lap of the political and financial gods. Uncertain deities at any time, now tightrope-walking over the strong current of social change profoundly affecting every phase of French life, and outlook, it is unlikely that any very sensational announcement will be forthcoming.

The Church has long ago realised the importance of directing attention to the choice of films for children and adolescents, and such an organisation as *Ciné Famille* extends its influence through the Roman Catholic schools and societies. *Bon Cinema*, which began by a series of film entertainments for the Orphan Apprentices of Auteuil, has enlarged its activities to public showings to which Parisians, and especially those living in that district, can bring their children "without risk of coming across immoral films." These are carefully selected and whenever possible seen by the organisers before exhibition, in other cases reference is made to the Catholic review *Choisir*.

The *Cendrillon Club*, which meets in the centre of fashionable Paris, is organised by Madame Sonika Bó and has a membership of about two hundred. For the past three years, weekly programmes have consisted for the most part of travelogue and documentary, several Mickeys, and entertainment shorts interspersed with musical items, dance and recitation competitions for prizes given by various firms as advertisement, followed by a short discussion of the films seen.

Whereas most of the efforts made have been to encourage an intelligent selection of films in the sphere of children's entertainment, Madame Aron, sister of M. Benoit-Lévy and founder of the *Ciné Club des Ecoliers*, has seen the cinema as the bridge between the child's imagination and the reality of the world in which he lives. For the past five years she has organised on Thursdays—French half holiday—shows for which neither the poorer school children nor the endowed schools and clubs pay entry: the remainder contribute a small sum towards the expenses for which Madame Aron holds herself responsible.

The shows are given in different parts of Paris at least once a month in cinemas carefully selected as regards ventilation, cloakroom accommodation, etc. The eight hundred to two thousand children attending any one performance, come from very different homes. At first Madame Aron and her helpers found that they had not only to combat the snobbishness of the well-to-do but control the unruly, among them chain-smokers of ten or eleven years old. There was often a feeling of resentment among the children at the idea of being separated from the grown-up world. "A programme for us? We'd rather go to the proper cinema!" was the retort on seeing the first announcement of the club's activities, but their interest and confidence gained, a friendly atmosphere was soon created.

Films are announced and sometimes commentated by the children. Although Walt Disneys and entertainment films are included, preference is given to straight documentaries, and the programme as a whole is always chosen to illustrate a central theme. Madame Aron adapts newsreels, cuts and rearranges most films and has made several especially for children. On the principle that it is essential to associate the film with the children's experience, films were shown which dealt with towns—Paris in particular and their own quarter whenever possible—and afterwards it was arranged that a number of children went on a tour of the city. Many scenarios were sent in for a film entitled *Life in Paris* which was eventually made, chiefly of extracts from films and newsreels.

The programmes which followed were on agriculture and rural life and the country in general, such as the film *Tour de France*, which is based on a familiar story included in the school readers, and showing the adventures of two children who travel through the different provinces. Then England and the neighbouring countries were explored and prizes given for the best answers to such questions as: "How would you get to London from your home?" I saw some interesting scenarios on the holidays written with infinite pains on lined copy books and illustrated by picture postcards and coloured drawings. In this way the children learn to select and piece together the basic visual material of film and learn something, however slight, of its construction.

With the development of these methods many variations have been introduced. Breton songs and dances, for instance, were given by the children after a film on Brittany had been shown. Emil Cohl, octogenarian inventor of the cartoon, talked to them; Antony Gross, co-director of *Joie de Vivre*, demonstrated how he made his films and Lumière passed in review forty years of cinema history, while engineers and other experts have added something personal to the interest of the films selected. In the cases of the *Maggi* propaganda film for milk, *Automobile de France*, dealing with the manufacture of Renault cars, and other films, through the co-operation of the firms concerned, the State railways and other authorities, a great many children have been able to see for themselves the processes described. At the same time Madame Aron owes much of the success of her efforts to the friendly help of both teachers and parents.

The sets of films have accumulated year by year and these are lent free of charge to settlements and other social activities. Talking of her work, which has always been with and for children, Madame Aron emphasised that the film was always a strain on the child, it demanded a response and an effort of concentration. The programmes for special shows should always attempt an ordered development of ideas and films be chosen with a view to the greatest simplicity possible. She has tried to make other people's surroundings and jobs *real* to them, to widen and clarify their world. She hopes that one day it will be possible to receive a party of English schoolchildren as guests of the *Ciné Club des Ecoliers*, and that French children should visit England and on their return describe their impressions to the other members.

"The film is necessary to complete education," she said. "We must do what we can but the cinema is still a luxury. The first problem is housing, decent conditions and good food, then we can think of films on a large scale."

Newsreel Rushes by the Commentator

CHRISTMAS FAIRY TALE. Amazing is the fact that the world should be discussing the biggest "International Gossip" story of the century without beginning: "Once upon a time there lived a Bachelor King . . .", so far removed from hard 20th century reality does the story seem to be. Since it first broke in the American Press months ago, grew rapidly from an echoing whisper to a blaring roar, listeners to American-fed tale-spinners in this country have changed their tune from a first "don't speak to me about it—it's all lies" tempo—through a "well, it does seem rather far-fetched"—into a "well, perhaps there's something in it,"—and finally to a "what are they saying now?" But few foresaw the shattering effect, when the news did finally break here.

With the entire British Press "ostriching," it was too much to expect the infinitely more cowardly newsreels to take an independent line. Interest therefore centred on transatlantic reports. Friends made on a fairly recent trip were commissioned as reel spies. It soon became clear that American Editors were itching to put out screen stories, were being balked by British Editors refusing, or not daring, to send material. With transatlantic cables sizzling with U.S. editorial curses, British Big-men at length relaxed their ban, sent cameramen to Ipswich for the Simpson divorce, only to have them sent back by the police. The only U.S. reel to recover from this stunning blow was Pathé News. A friend sent across the wording of the poster outside New York's Radio City Theatre: "England's American Queen. Pictures of King Edward and Mrs. Simpson bring Royal Romance to the Screen, as World discusses possibility of England's Bachelor King Marrying the former Baltimore Belle."

Pathé News' story contains only library shots of King Edward, the Duke of York's wedding, Mrs. Simpson's Baltimore home, Buckingham Palace, but no cinepictures of Mrs. Simpson, only still pictures of The King and she together, and of raving Press headlines. Considering the fever heat of U.S. columnists, the commentary was amazingly restrained. It ran something like this: "King Edward the Eighth, the world's most famous bachelor, has often been a best man, but never a bridegroom. When he watched his younger brother, the Duke of York, march to the altar, the King seemed pleased, but his own wedding march has yet to be written. To-day the American Press is filled with rumours of Royal Romance, coupling the name of King Edward with that of Mrs. Ernest Simpson, the former Baltimore Belle. As a girl, in Maryland, she lived in this quiet and humble home—to-morrow she may dwell in Buckingham Palace. The King and Mrs. Simpson have been pictured together on many occasions, and in this topsy-turvy world it may be the turn of an American woman to marry an English Monarch. Only one man knows the answer, and as yet he is keeping it a royal secret."

The final surge of the story into Britain's Press brought many a headache to reel editors. Libraries were ransacked for old royal films, hundreds of feet of old negatives were viewed, scripts were written, commentators thumbed synonym dictionaries for non-committing words, cameramen lurked in Cumberland Terrace. But to no purpose. Through all the first days of electric tension, no whisper disturbed the dull monotony of the nation's newscreens. Remarks heard on all sides: "What a final crashing condemnation of the men who claim the title 'NEWSreel' for their product!" "What waste of fine technique and perfect organisation, when every controversial story is regarded as a ticking bomb." "How will they ever hope to rise from the muddy rut of self-satisfied ignorance in which they now wallow!" The newsreel's action seems to be matched by the rumour of B.B.C. News Editor John Coatman hurrying to Downing Street, to receive his instructions as to what comment should be made in broadcast bulletins—but that is a "scandal" for George Audit to investigate.

* * * *

G.B.'s Emmott, speaking over St. Neots' quads' birthday party: "This is Michael, waiting for his dinner, and worrying about his distressed area."

* * * *

The March of Time strikes a new high with its story about U.S. rabble-rouser Gerald Smith. Here was breathless speed, action, the clash of personalities, the stimulation of controversy. Superb effect—during final sequence of Smith stumping the country, his raucous voice speaking over a shot of a train at speed, with the engine's siren blowing raspberries.

* * * *

So badly had the newsreels got the jitters over the Constitutional crisis that even when King Edward VIII abdicated, their specials were contemptible. None of them had the courage to face up to the issue involved and the attempt to use the Queen Mary angle plus stock shots of the new King to cover up their cowardice, impressed nobody. The crisis has clearly demonstrated that the newsreels are dependent upon and fearful of the magic word *authority* and that they are unable to fulfil their responsibilities to the public on an issue of domestic importance. When will one of the newsreels have the courage to break through?

* * * *

A 16mm. unit sent to Spain by a progressive film institute to film scenes of the Civil War, has just returned from Madrid with nearly 3,000 feet of material, including 400 feet shot in colour. Ivor Montagu is now editing the film which will be exhibited throughout the country.

The unit spent a week in Madrid and was under fire several times both in the front lines and in aerial bombardments in the city itself.

Graphic shots were secured of the disturbance caused by these bombardments and of the measures taken by the authorities to defend the town.

The unit spent some time with the famous International Column securing camera interviews with Ludwig Renn, Beimler (since killed), and the military leaders of the Government. The photographic quality of the material is excellent.

Filming a Farm

by Andrew Buchanan

This is the fourth of a series of ten amateur-tuition articles written for World Film News readers who are actively interested in amateur film work

Winter on the Farm *(G.P.O.)*

FARMS ARE ALWAYS popular on the commercial screen, both as backgrounds for rustic romances, and as purely "scenic" interludes, primarily because the majority of cinema-goers live in towns, and find the countryside refreshing to gaze upon. Furthermore, close-ups of pigs guarantee laughs, roses round the door make couples lean closer, and the upturned shafts of a cart in a turnip field at sunset, bring tears to the eyes of the grimmest documentalist; whilst jolly "Varmers" in immaculate smocks, symbolise the town's interpretation of country folk. Many people appear to think that farmers spend their lives squatting heavily on imitation antique oak settles, alternately drinking cider and sucking straw.

Holidays on farms, and drives into the country are planned as if foreign countries or primitive places were about to be explored, whereas town and country are interdependent, a fact clearly explained in Basil Wright's *The Country Comes to Town*, and it is upon this basis that the intelligent film on farming should be constructed. Therefore, the amateur director will do well to remove from his mind the conventional approach, which glorifies the old farm, and contents itself with superficial beauty, unless, of course, he desires to produce a purely pastoral sequence that is nice to look upon, but which reveals nothing about the subject.

We have seen too many "perfectly delightful" rural tableaux of artfully grouped milkmaids, cows' tails swishing in the foreground, and pigs shot from unbelievably low levels—of intelligence! But we have not learnt from such pictures that farming is one of the hardest and most responsible jobs a man can have, nor have we seen farms at work, day and night, summer and winter, to supply cities with essential produce, for only the brightest day in June is picked to shoot cattle browsing, through gauzes, and harvesters silhouetted against skies that are just a trifle too lovely.

Now the amateur director has, I hope, the time and the freedom to film farming as it really is, and so it is up to him to show the enslaved and somewhat hurried professional how to do the job intelligently. For this reason, I am most anxious to develop the right approach to the subject before dealing with technicalities, and if my foregoing remarks have succeeded in influencing him away from the usual approach to the countryside, represented by the fiercely filtered field, and the "Old Inne" interior of the studio, where yokels' faces are framed with crepe hair, and all are filled with a dreadful gaiety as they bang their pewter mugs on the three-ply counter, then I have achieved something.

It is interesting for the amateur to bear in mind that most farmers rise about 4.30 a.m. and frequently have to grope their way through fog to find their cattle—have to trudge, knee-deep, through sodden fields, search the hills for sheep in a wind that cuts like a razor, and sit up until midnight working out their complicated records and studying graphs which reveal their output of eggs. In other words they have to struggle and toil as only hardened folk can, in order to gain a living by supplying cities with produce. Needless to say, such hardships should not form the basis of a film, but they should be definitely referred to, so that the farmer shall be portrayed accurately—a mixture of scientist, agriculturist and accountant—instead of a lazy red-faced joker, whose vocabulary is confined to Eh, Ah, and Um.

When the milk is late in the morning, or there is a shortage of eggs, there is a suburban commotion akin to a minor revolution, but where do these commodities come from, and who knows of the vast system behind their delivery? Very few, and that is why filming farming is an important subject that should be tackled with understanding.

How should one begin? By locking up the camera in the attic, gripping one's pencil, sitting down somewhere beyond the reach of eager technicians, and methodically listing a series of scenes which shall, broadly, form the basis of the production. I should commence with a map of England, upon which a pointer would draw attention to the chief agricultural counties showing the large centres they feed, and then dissolve, fade, or otherwise change that map into a close-up of a particular county, in the heart of which lies the farm or area it is proposed to study. This introduction enables titles or commentary to explain the subject, and the interrelation of farms and cities, and should be followed by some dairy produce in shops—baskets of eggs labelled "New Laid"; slabs of butter and cheese; loaves of bread; and then some milk bottles being placed on steps. The farmer supplies these regularly, in quantities that the normal mind would find difficult to grasp, but it is the normal uninitiated mind that the producer is catering for, and so his film should reveal the work behind the systematic delivery of foodstuffs which are so familiar that one never bothers to think about them.

Now there is one difficulty about filming farming, arising out of the fact that each particular branch offers material for a feature film, so that it is not very simple to merge all of them into one production. Maybe, the amateur will decide to make several films, one devoted to poultry keeping, another to milk, and perhaps a third to bread, but, as an example, I am going to suggest he creates an impression of them all, beginning say, with eggs.

The display in the dairy might be followed with the hands of a farmer holding up the graph which shows him how his output stands, and this can merge into a comprehensive shot of poultry in portable houses. A few bold close studies of the birds feeding, eggs being removed from the nests, and a hen having medicine thrust down its throat, should then be intercut with a well-lit series of shots of a mechanical egg-grading machine, with its rotating spider arms that pick up eggs, estimate their weight, and drop them gently into their correct compartments. Modern poultry farming is a scientific industry, and whether it be electric incubation, or the mechanical sorting of eggs, the interdependence of town and country should be emphasised by alternate sequences showing the farm, the grader, and, if the director pleases, the dairy.

Similarly, milk offers countless opportunities for cross-cutting, as its history in brief proves. The amateur should make up his list from the following details. Modern conditions enable cows to be housed in immaculate, tiled houses, where their stalls are divided by chromium tubular fittings, and chains, and, in many instances, they are milked mechanically. Now that, in itself, is a most interesting sequence, but following the milking, giant road tankers, working to a rigid time schedule, supplement railways, by transporting huge quantities of milk through the

Filming a Farm (contd.)

night, to various distributing centres. Upon arrival, the milk is pasteurised and bottled mechanically, and simultaneously, used bottles are being washed. The machinery in these centres offers fine opportunities for the film-maker; gleaming tanks wherein the milk is pasteurised feeding rotating filling machines—lines and lines of bottles being conveyed to the fillers where they are whisked round, and off again, capped, and ready for delivery.

Back on the farm, the cattle are sent out to graze, and then more milking. Road tankers starting out again to the farms to return laden at night—a ceaseless, giant industry that is very different to the idyllic sight presented by a movie star in a large bonnet milking one cow, whilst chatting prettily to a ragged, though handsome shepherd.

Bread! Mechanical reaping—circular arms cutting the wheat is fine material, and then the parallel work of milling, and the wonders in the modern bakery, where huge mixers revolve whilst plunging arms pound up the dough. More harvesting in the fields, and then rows of loaves slowly entering ovens, and emerging from the other side, baked.

As I cannot hope to outline, in detail, a complete survey of this subject, I merely suggest a line of approach which should be clearly tabulated on paper before shooting begins. Naturally, it will be more lengthy and expensive installing lights in city bakeries, egg graduating rooms, and milk bottling stations, but the result obtained, enabling dramatic contrasts to be made, makes the job worthwhile, and unless the whole story is told the importance of the subject is lost sight of.

I advise the amateur to employ close-ups to magnify important details, whether it be the head of a hen as it pecks the ground, the figures on a graph, mechanical fingers gripping eggs, the big arm of the dough mixer, or the bewildered eye of the milking cow, for these register the essential character of the theme, leaving the audience in no doubt as to the importance of farming, and its relation to one's daily life.

Even if financial or technical limitations prevent one carrying out such a production, a great deal of good will be done by producing it in one's mind, for the essential point about making films is to be able to see a subject as it really is. If this is achieved, the actual film shot, though not as comprehensive as it might have been, will present a far more intelligent viewpoint than one shot by the man who has not grasped the fundamental importance of the subject. I repeat a point I have frequently emphasised—that if amateurs knew as much about the subjects they film as they do about the insides of their cameras, the results would be of greater value, for technical equipment alone can never create the perfect film.

The first essential is to study the subject; next, to plan it on paper; thirdly, to remove any items from the list which disturb continuity, and fourthly to shoot it so that the result shall not distract an audience by unnecessary camera eccentricities. Upon these lines filming farming can be a great experience for the amateur director, who should weave the natural beauty of the various locations he visits into his narrative, so that they embellish, but in no way dominate, the production.

(*G.P.O.*)

A Federation of Cine Clubs?

SO FAR, NO CLAIM appears to have been made by any existing amateur film club to be the oldest body of its kind, nor does there seem to be any record to tell us which was the original one. We do not know how many amateur film clubs there are in this country at the present time. All that can be said is that more clubs are coming into being, and going out of being again, than was the case a few years ago.

There are a hundred or so amateur film clubs on the unofficial roll at the present time. In twelve months time, many of them will have vanished, having accomplished nothing, and new ones will have taken their place, with every chance of meeting the same fate. Unless, of course, something drastic is done in the interval.

These clubs range from quite elaborate organisations owning property, running a studio, and requiring, but not always receiving, heavy subscriptions from their members, down to modest little groups that have nothing, not even a subscription. A few clubs are now several years old, have made films and thereby achieved publicity or notoriety; others have merely made films; the rest simply arrived, announced themselves, and gently disappeared.

The trouble is the inability of the film club to organise itself effectively in a way that will keep itself solvent and its members active, informed and instructed.

The bodies—interested parties, all of them—who have sought to do something to help the amateur club movement are, notably, the Institute of Amateur Cinematographers; the Royal Photographic Society; the British Film Institute; Scottish Film Council; *World Film News; Home Movies;* and one or two of the clubs themselves, such as the Meteor Film Producing Society and Salford Cine Society.

It seems a pity—to put it mildly—that so many separate moves should be being made towards the same end. If the amateur film club is worth saving, it will take the united efforts of all these interested parties to do it. What is wanted is an authoritative national body, representative of all interests, to co-ordinate the activities of the cine clubs; to form and control a federation of cine clubs; to be the paramount body governing the whole gamut of organised amateur cinematography. The same thing has been done in other circles—it is time it was done for the amateur screen.

There are bound to be difficulties in forming a combine of interests such as those mentioned, but they should not be insuperable, given a suitable constitution for this National Federation of Amateur Cine Societies. For it is not being suggested that the interested parties should abandon their present politics nor lose their present personalities—merely that part of their present activities be diverted. The N.F.A.C.S. would keep a register of all its member-clubs, of which there would be various categories, would control, suitably, the National Amateur Film Library; and would control the national film competitions, run on an elimination basis. It would indicate to clubs, when required, how to organise themselves for satisfactory continued existence, and be a guide to the whole amateur cine club movement.

I. S. R.

Amateur Cine Clubs

WIMBLEDON CINE CLUB: The winter programme was opened with a meeting to which members of seven London cine clubs were invited. A varied collection of films was shown, and a member of each society spoke on the amateur cine movement. Both A. Vesselo and Paul Rotha have given talks, and films from other amateur clubs have been shown and criticised by members. The last meeting in December was devoted to a talk and demonstration of "Kodachrome" by Messrs. Kodak. Secretary: C. W. Watkins, I.A.C., 79 Mostyn Rd., Merton Park, Surrey.

* * *

METEOR FILM PRODUCING SOCIETY: A series of short talks and displays of the Society's films have been given to various literary and social clubs and drama groups in Glasgow. The current production, *Fourth in Hand*, is rapidly taking shape, and all interior shooting has been completed. A list of the Society's films, which may be hired for display, can be had from the programme secretary, Ian S. Ross, 80 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1. The membership secretary is Miss Peggie L. Clark, 15 North Gardner Street, Glasgow, W.1.

* * *

THE BECKENHAM CINE SOCIETY has been in existence for five years and has made eighteen films. Individual efforts by members have been shown as far afield as New Zealand. The film *Harvest Moon* has recently been awarded a certificate by the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain.

The Society meets every Tuesday and Thursday for projection and shooting, and visitors interested in the work are invited to The Studio at 5 Victoria Buildings, Beckenham Road. Associate membership costs 5*s.* per year.

Members of the Society are willing to give talks to Clubs and Societies in the district, on sub-standard film work.

SAYINGS OF THE MONTH

"I would burn the films as we used to burn the filthy newspapers."—*Mr. Lynch, at a meeting of Donegal County Council.*

"And I would buy you a box of matches."—*Mr. Gallen, at the same meeting.*

"Heart! Heart! Heart! and more Heart!"—*Eric Maschwitz.*

TOOTS PARAMOUR LAID TO REST

Extraordinary scenes were witnessed as the funeral cortège of Miss Paramour (late Studio Snooper of *W.F.N.*) wended its way to the Battersea Cats' Home. The coffin, made out of old film tins was placed on a simple camera truck (kindly loaned by Bullseye Productions Ltd.) and drawn by eight prominent gossip writers clad in deep morning dress.

A huge procession followed the hearse, including representatives of all the lesser known film companies, seventy ex-husbands of Miss Paramour, and innumerable rude urchins.

The wreaths were many and various, and included a vast bust of Gloria Musquash made out of Jerusalem artichokes (kindly loaned by Miss Musquash), and a reversed swastika of magenta georgette sent by Abe Maurdough.

As the coffin was being lowered into the Tabby cats' cemetery vault, a large car drove rapidly up, out of which stepped Guffenheim MacAndrew, Maisie MacMudd (noted film star), Juju Strumpp (ace director) and other notables. They were at once interviewed by W.F.N.'s reporter, who learnt that they had come along to see if it was really true. On being reassured on this point they left rapidly in a celebration party at the Monstrosity Bar.

* * *

Tributes to Miss Paramour continue to pour in. We give a few of them below.

JUJU STRUMPP: "She was a grand old pest, and if she hadn't bumped herself off someone would have had to do it."

SNOOKS GREISER: "So she couldn't take it, huh?"

EDITOR OF *W.F.N.*: "I anticipate a rapid rise in circulation."

MANAGER OF *W.F.N.* "Now perhaps we'll get some advertising."

GLORIA MUSQUASH: "Dear Toots, she died as she lived, and How."

ALBERT HALL (veteran actor): "She will be missed by us all. We can breathe again. But the last Toots will one day sound for us as well as her. Do not therefore delay your visit to the Superba, where my latest film *The Private Life of Thomas Aquinas* is playing to capacity. "

FROM OUR CASUALTY WARD CORRESPONDENT

Phillip Fluff, known as the World's Boy-Friend, who was accidentally knocked unconscious by a bottle during the Trade Show of his new picture, *Don't Tear It, Take the Piece*, is a little better, unfortunately.

ONLY MY FUN

She came—a star of great renown
From Hollywood to London Town.
She ducked the gangplank ballyhoo
And travelled third to Waterloo;
Avoiding all the station fuss,
She took a humble motor-bus
To some obscure and cheap hotel
(But one which did her very well).
She did not entertain the Press
In swanky suite and scanty dress;
She did not go to smart first-nights,
For her there flared no sashalites;
She did not trouble to lay bare
The details of her love affair,
She used no "swells" nor "wonderfuls,"
Nor eulogised our constables;
She worked for hours without a break
Upon the film she came to make.

* * *

Who was this paragon, this queen?
We do not know—she's never been.

THE SCENTED SECOND

I'm not very parshall
To Herbert Marshall.
He's always walking out into
a blizzard if he can
Leaving the little woman to
the other man.
Which, for the little woman,
may be wizard,
But is it quite fair to the
blizzard?

WEE JIMSY

A' THE road frae Thrums, wee Jimsy Barrie comes, fleein' owre the hoose-taps and blawin' doon the lums. Wi' a wish ablow ilk oxter, and kisses roond his thumbs—oh, Jimsy the Whimsy and his wee fairy chums!

There is glamourie and witchery and magic when he flees; a kilt made oot the stuff o' dreams, he wears aroond his knees; his belfry's fou o' baukiebirds, his bonnet's fou o' bees—oh, Jimsey the Whimsy and the muckle weird he drees!

There's gnomes ahint the ingleneuk, there's kelpies in the shed; there's sprites inside the aumrie, and elves ablow the bed; there's witches on their besom-shanks, and through the lift they've sped—for Jimsy the Whimsy on honey-dew has fed.

—Macnib, *Glasgow Evening News.*

HINTS TO PUBLICITY WALLAHS

This is how they manage their posters in Ireland—

"Many's the head will be broken after the brawl, and many's the side will be aching after the howls and screams of this wild Irish nose-busting shindy."

Try this out, boys, on the advance publicity for Garbo's *Camille*.

* * *

The latest invention to come to my notice (remember last week I told you about the steam engine?) is a bowler hat made entirely of cellophane.

This is intended for use in cinemas and gives the wearer an uninterrupted view of the screen, which may not be such a good thing.

The idea is that every filmgoer takes one of these hats into the cinema with him and places it on the head of the man immediately in front of him. If there's a woman immediately in front of him that's just too bad. It means he's got to listen to her telling her friend just what's going to happen next in the picture.

As if he couldn't guess.

CONVERSATION—WITH APOLOGIES TO "PUNCH"

"Have you seen *Episode?*"

"Rather! I never miss a William Powell picture."

"Oh no—you're thinking of the American version of *Escapade*, with that new Austrian girl."

"Yes—Louise Wessely—and wasn't it called *Maskerade?*"

"No—that was the other one."

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO A SUPER-CINEMA

BY JOHN MILTON

Anon out of the earth a Fabrick huge
Rose like an Exhalation, with the sound
Of Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a Temple, where *Pilasters* round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With Golden Architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or Frieze, with bossy Sculptures grav'n.
The Roof was fretted Gold. Not *Babilon*,
Nor great *Alcairo* such magnificence
Equal'd in all thir glories, to inshrine
Belus or *Serapis* thir Gods, or seat
Thir Kings, when *Egypt* with *Assyria* strove
In wealth and luxurie. Th' ascending pile
Stood fixt her stately highth, and strait the dores
Op'ning thir brazen foulds discover wide
Within, her ample spaces, o're the smooth
And level pavement: from the arched roof
Pendant by suttle Magic many a row
Of Starry Lamps and blazing Cressets fed
With *Naphtha* and *Asphaltus* yeilded light
As from a sky, The hasty multitude
Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise
And some the Architect. . . .

(*Paradise Lost*, *I.* 710–732.)

A LORUM

OF COURSE, THIS ISN'T TO GO ANY FURTHER

Sing a song of Press Shows,
Full of movie czars,
Five-and-twenty Press Men
Pocketing cigars.
When the show is over,
Nothing left to do
But go back to the office
and remembering that we
don't want to lose the
film companies' advertising,
write
a very
nice
review.

* * *

This month's Aureole of Birdseed goes to the noble folk of Drumbeg, Sutherlandshire, Scotland, for the following notice, prominently displayed on the seashore:

"NOTICE TO TOURISTS

Tourists are respectfully requested to refrain from profaning the Sabbath day by any recreation. By Local Request."

DAVE ROBSON says:—

As came the talkies, so cometh the colour, but what of the smellies?

I tried out such an effect in a surburban cinema a few years ago, during a run of *Drifters*. To heighten up the effect of the film I strung up one hundred herring in the air conditioning plant and started up the air intake at the commencement of the film. The natural sea breezes soon drifted to the auditorium, wherein a delighted audience were not only swayed by the visual effect of the drifters drawing in their catch, but went home with a good appetite for fish.

The following week, however, *Sands of the Desert* was featured, and I might add, under real tropical conditions, for not only were the patrons worried by a plague of flies, but their nostrils were irritated by a pugnacious smell as the camels trotted by under the Eastern sun. I had forgotten to remove the herring!

SNOOKS GREISER, *W.F.N.'s* unadulterated liftboy, encountered a certain C. Laughton in the lift the other day.

Snooks: So you're going to play the Emperor Claudius next, huh?

C. Laughton: Certainly.

Snooks: And Claudius was a cripple, huh?

C. Laughton: Yes, but——

Snooks: And small, huh?

C. Laughton: Yes of course, but——

Snooks: And very thin, huh? Well anyhow, you'll have to get rid of your Rembrandt whiskers because he shaved and hadn't much hair. Third Floor, Arts, Crafts, Basketwork, Poker work, Fretwork, Plasticine, and *World Film News*.

William Powell
Makes me howell,
But Myrna Loy—
Oh! boy!

"THE GREEN PASTURES"—1937

CHORUS OF VOICES: "HOW HEAVENLY! AT LAST WE HAVE BOTH FEET ON THE GROUND —"

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A Year of Continental Films

by A. VESSELO

THE THIRTY-ONE feature-films which I have set out below according to countries of origin were all exhibited in London for the first time between December 1935 and December 1936. Seven had their first showing at the Film Society, eight at the Academy, eight at the Curzon, six at Studio One, and one each at the Forum and the Polytechnic. Although ten countries are represented on my list, it will be seen that one, France, contributes over a third of the total: in fact, in quality, as well as in quantity, the French films have led the way.

At their head, inevitably, comes *L'Atalante*, Jean Vigo's last film (now more than three years old)—the work of a man already inwardly foreshadowing death, and translating its odd displacements of human values into his own terms. *Merlusse*, directed by Marcel Pagnol, portrays with unaccustomed sensibility and insight an episode in the lives of a group of boys at a French Lycée: the atmosphere is reproduced so understandingly that one is almost transported to the scene. As for Feyder's *La Kermesse Héroïque*—declared to be the most successful Continental film shown in this country since the advent of sound—it has been overpraised, and its pictorial basis in the representations of classical painting establishes a dubious principle; but in its own field it is witty and accomplished, with the same anti-bourgeois sting as Clair's *Chapeau de Paille d'Italie*.

Bonne Chance is a neat and amusing enough little trifle, putting forward the versatile Sacha Guitry in every conceivable capacity, as scenarist, director, chief performer and what you will. Anatole Litvak's *Mayerling*, a dramatization of the suicide of Rudolph of Austria in 1889, stamps itself as romantic tragedy—sweetish, but above all emotionally dexterous. Then we have *Second Bureau*, a peace-time spy-melodrama, which illuminatingly shows us France and Germany as acknowledged enemies, and in which the virtues and defects of spy-melodrama are more or less evenly balanced; and from this point we proceed in order, *via* Edmond Greville's rather superfluous ingenuities, through competence, greater and less, to sentimental naïveté (*Sans Famille*), and from naïveté to the uninspired and unlikely entanglements of *The Phantom Gondola*.

After France, Austria follows with some appropriateness; for Vienna, in this between-wars generation, is the romantic Eldorado of all who travel in armchair-luxury upon the dark seas of the picture-house. And since this is so, it is presumably fitting also that Vienna herself should nourish the fantasy; so that out of seven films which she sends us, six are as fully as possible divorced from current realities. The seventh is *Die Ewige Maske*, made by Werner Hochbaum: a seriously-intentioned and carefully-handled study of temporary insanity as experienced by a young doctor in a Basle hospital. The remaining films fall only too easily into their categories. They are, respectively: an Orczy spy-tale (pre-war style); a tragic love-tale, set in a cosmopolitan nineteenth-century Paris inhabited chiefly by artists and dancers; a pair of 'gay Viennese' musical comedies; a somewhat outdated drama of misunderstandings; and an unspeakably mawkish and shoddily-constructed film of the Vienna Choirboys.

All four German films steer cautiously clear of actuality: three in fact are period-pieces. Of these, the melodrama *Savoy-Hotel* 217 is chiefly of interest as coming from those two capable craftsmen, Gustav Ucicky and Fritz Arno Wagner; but here craftsmanship is allied to something less than originality, and the result largely a reminiscence, occasionally halting and in mood not always pleasant, of earlier, more vital work. *The Student of Prague* is more chary as mysticism and in sum not half so compelling of the post-war silent version; and the operetta, *Letzte Rose*, sags off into complete boredom. *Reifende Jugend* gives us a flying glimpse of a swastika flag: beyond this, it seems to suggest that modern Teutonic youth, whether singing or ripening, is invariably maudlin.

In direct contrast to the films from Central Europe, both contributions from the U.S.S.R. concern themselves almost violently with present-day problems. That alone gives them an elementary strength and conviction which, whatever one's individual reactions, makes them difficult to brush aside. Even Ptushko's puppet-film, *The New Gulliver*, has political satire at its core; and from this undoubtedly—though in certain ways the satire is questionably apt—derives much of the film's fascination. Animation is imperfect; but any inadequacies of technique are dwarfed by those of Kuleshov's *The Great Consoler*, which is incredibly static and theatrical. Yet the fervent sincerity of the theme manages, one hardly knows how, eventually to penetrate; leaving us with an impression of the unsuperably bad and the intensely moving oddly and unevenly mixed.

Of films about childhood and adolescence, one of the better-made and more authentic is Poland's *Day of the Great Adventure*; though here an urge to capture the scenic beauties of the Tatra mountains under snow has been allowed seriously to impede the action. None of the other films listed is of first importance. *Fredlös* and *Janosik*, both excursions into the past, are fundamentally variations on the same theme, of the upright hero outlawed by a tyrant; and in each the virtues are mainly photographic. More consistently sombre, *Fredlös* is also perhaps less entirely conventional. *De Kribbebijter*, a comedy, is at least well-acted, if otherwise a trifle tedious. *Re Burlone*, our first importation from Italy for years, is notable for some efficient camera-work and nothing much else. Starting off lightly in Naples *circa* 1840, it develops a political aspect, and its final intentions are indecipherable. *Wedad the Slave* is said to be the 'first Egyptian talking-film.' It looks like it.

"Marchand d'Amour"

LIST OF FILMS

FRANCE	GERMANY
L'Atalante	Savoy-Hotel 217
Merlusse	The Student of Prague
La Kermesse Héroïque	Letzte Rose
Bonne Chance	Reifende Jugend
Mayerling	U.S.S.R.
Second Bureau	The New Gulliver
Marchand d'Amour	The Great Consoler
Veille d'Armes	POLAND
Anne-Marie	The Day of the Great Adventure
Sans Famille	DENMARK
The Phantom Gondola	Fredlös
AUSTRIA	HOLLAND
Die Ewige Maske	De Kribbebijter
The Emperor's Candlesticks	CZECHOSLOVAKIA
Maria Bashkirtseff	Janosik
Liebesmelodie	ITALY
Sylvia und ihr Chauffeur	Re Burlone
Hohe Schule *or* The Secret of Cavelli	EGYPT
Singende Jugend	Wedad the Slave

N.B.—The names are unfortunately half in English, half in language of origin; but that is due to the differing practices of the cinemas concerned.—A.V.

NEWS FROM THE SOCIETIES

WOLVERHAMPTON: On December 6th *Bird Sanctuary*, *Housing Problems*, and Len Lye's *Rainbow Dance* were shown to members. *Wings Over Everest*, *Chapter and Verse*, and the *Nutrition Film* have been booked for the January meeting. Secretary: J. N. Tomlins, Astolat, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton.

FILM SOCIETY OF AYRSHIRE: The programme given at the Broadway Cinema, Prestwick, on December 6th, included *Don Quixote* and *Der Hauptmann von Koepenick*. Mr. Colin McPherson lectured before the showing. Hon. Secretary: J. A. Paton Walker, 5 St. Marnock Street, Kilmarnock.

EDINBURGH FILM GUILD: The aim of the meeting held on December 6th was to give two views of studio conditions, similar in their satirical basis, but contrasted in their national origin. *Once in a Lifetime*, an American film produced in 1932, was shown first, and was followed by *Marchand D'Amour*, a French film of 1935.

On December 20th the French school drama *Merlusse* is to be shown to the Guild. Four performances have been planned for 1937. Secretary: Douglas A. Donald, 16 Great King Street, Edinburgh, 3.

LONDON SCHOOLS FILM SOCIETY: Since its inception a year ago, this society has made valuable contacts with film producers and the manufacturers of sub-standard apparatus. It has been in active co-operation with the London Film Institute Society and the British Film Institute, and at the end of June had 112 members. The meetings have included discussions on the film in relation to the teaching of Geography, History, Nature Study and Hygiene. A producing unit of the Society has also been busy during the summer on the production of a silent teaching film. Hon. Secretary: F. E. Farley, 50 Ashridge Crescent, S.E.18.

CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY: This society seeks to use the medium of the cinema for the Church. As the Church is international, the society is trying to makes its work international. To do this the society aims at a Central Film Bureau, or International Film Pool, which will help to circulate Catholic sub-standard films throughout the world by arranging exchange of copyright. Enquiries have come steadily in from places as remote as Australia and the British West Indies and, nearer home, Ireland, France, Holland and Italy. These are being carefully filed, and it is hoped will form the nucleus of an organisation in line with the Pope's Encyclical on Films.

At the December display at Millicent Fawcett Hall, Rev. Fredinand Valentine. O.P., lectured on 'Liturgical Films,' the films shown were: *Dominican Mass*, and a Dominican Liturgical film. The address of the Hon. Secretary is 36 Great Smith Street, S.W.1.

STIRLING: A meeting of the Film Society was held in the Regent Cinema, Bannockburn, on December 13th. The feature film shown was René Clair's *Le Derniere Milliardaire* starring Paul Ollivier and Raymond Cordy.

THE LONDON FILM SOCIETY: At the first performance of the season the Society showed Ptushko's celebrated puppet film *The New Gulliver*, together with the American documentary film, made under the auspices of the Resettlement Administration, *The Plow That Broke the Plains*. On December 13th its programme included Georg Hollering's *Hortobagy*, reviewed in the December *World Film News*, together with two primitives, *Death Preferred* from the Cine Studios, and *The Beetle's Deception*, believed to be one of a series of Russian films made with real beetles by Professor Lozshki in 1912.

The next performance of the society will be held at the New Gallery Cinema on Sunday, January 10th, when the main film will be *La Tendre Enemie*, directed by Max Ophuls. Secretary: Miss Barbara Frey, 56 Manchester Street, London, W.1.

TYNESIDE FILM SOCIETY: The last exhibition for members during the Autumn Session took place on December 13th, when *Liebesmelodie*, *Mediaeval Village*, *Dawn to Dawn* and *Simple Charity* were shown—the latter being a ten-minute film of 1910, featuring Mary Pickford. The Society also did some valuable work during December by arranging two special matinees for children. The first was in conjunction with the local branch of the Modern Language Association, and the programme consisted of *Sans Famille*, starring Robert Lynen, *On Parade*, a Gasparcolor puppet film, *The Band Concert* (Mickey Mouse), and a three-minute diagrammatic film *Arabia and Islam*, with a French commentary. The second matinee, arranged with the co-operation of the Newcastle Education Committee, included *Bulldog Jack*, *On Parade*, *Krakatoa*, and *Night Mail*.

The society feels that the provision of exhibitions of specially selected healthy entertainment films for children is extremely desirable, and hope to arrange more matinees along these lines. The secretary is M. C. Pottinger, c/o Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1.

NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY: *Moana*, a film of the Samoan islanders by Robert Flaherty, was shown to the society on December 20th at the Monseigneur News Theatre, Strand. The programme also included *Moscow*, a recent sound film directed by Tissé, showing the industrial development of present-day Russia; *Ether Symphony*, George Pal's new puppet film, made for Phillip's Radio; *Vormittagspuk*, an early abstract film by Hans Richter; and *Cut It Out!* a Brunel burlesque. Hon. Secretary, H. A. Green, 8 King's Road, N.4.

INVERNESS: After an opening performance on November 10th at the Empire Theatre, which included *Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns*, *Night Mail*, *Easy Street* and *Episode*, a second programme was given on December 10th. The films shown were *Fortress of Peace*, a French film which vividly describes the picturesque loveliness of Mont St. Michel, and recreates the atmosphere of mystery and legend which is its special attraction; *The Key to Scotland*, a photographic survey of Edinburgh, showing the historical, education and commercial growth of Scotland; *Magic du Fer-blanc*, a film of the canning industry in France; and *Bonne Chance*, a French comedy directed by and starring Sacha Guitry. Hon. Secretary: Mr. John Mitchell, Royal Bank Buildings, Inverness.

"Janosik"

Seeing Films in Strange Places

By Carlos Marsden

Ibiza

GERMANY, 1926.

We arrived at a very small village in the Black Forest after a twenty-mile walk in the pouring rain. It was summer, but cold in the hilltop pine-woods, and we were warming ourselves at a log fire in the inn and drinking Kirschwasser of vintage violence. About 9 o'clock a great tramping of feet resounded above us, a stream of people passed the door and clumped up the wooden staircase outside.

These were pre-Nazi days, and we happily followed the crowd. Upstairs was a large barn. In it, several rows of plain wooden benches, an upright pianola, and a vast piece of twisted metal which on closer inspection proved to be a hand-turned projector in the last stages of collapse.

The room was nearly full. The audience was composed of a few healthy-looking peasant farmers and their families, and a large number of semi-starved foresters and charcoal-burners from the wooded hilltops. It was still raining and steam rose from everyone. No one talked much, and several of the children were already asleep.

We paid about 2*d*. for the edge of one of the back benches, and waited in some excitement to see what the film would be.

The rain dripped incessantly. The room smelt of wet clothes. The screen (a patched sheet) flapped uneasily in the draught.

A very, very old man came in, staggering beneath an immense pile of film tins. These he placed on the floor by the projector, and then tottered across to the pianola. After a sharp tussle, he succeeded in starting it off with a torn roll of Liszt's *Liebestraum*. (We did not then realise that this opus was the entire repertoire.)

Meantime, with a backward lean and a twist of the head, we succeeded in deciphering the label on the top tin. We were about to see Fritz Lang's *Niebelungen*, in its entirety.

Meantime, the old man was trying to strike up his projector light. The film was inflammable, everyone was smoking and the only exit was half-blocked by the projector.

With the patience which only comes from long familiarity, the audience steamed quietly on the benches. We ourselves felt the greatest suspense.

Suddenly, with a whirr like forty threshing machines, the machine started. The old man wound the handle frantically and with obvious effort. The light was switched off suddenly—and the vast epic began.

When the pianola roll ran out, the aged projectionist, glad, no doubt of a rest from his monstrous crank-handle, stumbled across to restart it.

The audience remained outwardly unmoved. The children slept peacefully.

Between reels, or more often during a reel, when the film broke, we could hear in the distance the baying of the angry and wolf-like dogs who guard the farms and villages of that district. Their remote echoes contrasted violently with the pandemonium of the projector and the pianola.

Reel by reel the saga ran its course, scratched, torn and continually breaking.

At midnight we crept away to bed, but well into the night we could hear the clatter of the apparatus triumphantly drowning the pianola, and it was only in the early hours that the heavily shod feet stamped down the stairs, the projector slept, and the old man, freed from his slavery, crept exhausted to his loft.

A month later, we saw *Niebelungen* in a *de luxe* cinema in Heidelberg, but did not enjoy it half so much.

JAMAICA, 1933.

An open-air cinema, a 2,000 seater, equipped with the latest projectors, the finest arcs, an enormous screen.

The body of the hall, open to the stars, and unlit by any other means, crammed with negroes. At the back on a balcony, roofed in like the stand on a racecourse, the whites—superior, uncomfortable, and aloof.

In the distance, the toots of the cavorting taxi-hordes of Kingston.

The supporting programme is just over. The management attempt (they will never learn) to floodlight the auditorium during the interval. From the massed banks of negroes as the headlights fade up, comes a long hiss rising in a crescendo. Cinemas have sometimes been wrecked for this in the West Indies, where darkness is the main item in the price of a seat. The management caves in, the lights are switched abruptly off. The hissing stops. There are a few isolated bursts of laughter.

The big film begins. Charles Laughton and Claudette Colbert in *The Sign of the Cross*. A gleaming, brand new copy from the States. The acoustics are perfect. The high intensity arcs turn the stars pale. A warm breeze blows across the auditorium.

This is the apotheosis of Cecil B. de Mille. Hokum it may be to the starched business men in the circle, but to most of the audience this film is a deep and moving religious experience. An electric silence is broken by murmurs and groans. At the climax, an indescribable din rises from the negroes, and afterwards, in the light of the street-lamps at the exits you can see that many of them have been crying.

IBIZA, 1936.

Before the civil war and the Italian bombing raids this was the happiest of the Balearic islands, its inhabitants real tillers of the soil, and its foreign population of émigrés and escapists as happy and carefree as any English, French, Germans or Russians have any right to be.

There are, or were, two cinemas, both converted from charming period theatres, with a horseshoe auditorium lined with a double tier of boxes supported on graceful wooden columns.

The performance begins at 9, and by 9.15 several early birds have arrived and amuse themselves by shouting wisecracks at their friends as they come in.

By 9.30 the auditorium is moderately full. Raw recruits from the garrison (soon to take unwilling part in the rebel cause), girls from the town, rude boys from the street, a few gnarled old peasants from the nearby villages, freakish foreigners of all sexes, and local worthies, such as the local banker, who is also the head of the smuggling industry, the Commandante of the Garrison (who will be shot in August for treason against the State), the Chief of Police, and the horsey American woman who has lived here so long that she is regarded as a native.

Everybody knows everyone else, and everybody waves and nods and shouts and smiles.

At 9.55 a small section of the audience decides is is high time to make a start. They indicate this by catcalls, butcher-boy whistling, and by a rhythmic hand clapping which becomes quite alarming in its intensity as the rest of the audience takes it up. There is a good deal of laughter and everyone is happy.

Nothing happens. The process is repeated several times, with the utmost good humour, and finally at 10.20 the lights go down, and an aged Laurel and Hardy is projected. To English ears the fact that ordinary Spanish voices have been dubbed on to the comedians gives the film a fantastic and almost macabre atmosphere. The projector frequently breaks down. No one cares.

But the *pièce de resistance* is an Astaire–Rogers epic. At about reel 4 they do a Spanish number—brilliantly. In an access of joy and excitement the audience rises to its feet, demands an encore, insists on an encore. The projectionist, ever obliging, retires to his cubby-hole, rewinds the film, basking the while in the glory of his position as Chief Magician, and the reel is projected again amid scenes of indescribable enthusiasm.

You would never think that these people were about to be involved in the agonies of civil rebellion. Yet many of them are already dead—in violence, and suddenly.

FILM GUIDE

Shorts

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves (Puppet film in Gasparcolor).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Slatinay and George Pal.

CHESTER: Tatler News Theatre	Jan. 25, 6 days
GILLINGHAM: Regal	Jan. 25, 3 days
NEATH: Windsor	Jan. 4, 6 days
STOCKPORT: Alexandra	Jan. 11, 6 days
WAKEFIELD: Savoy	Jan. 14, 3 days

And So to Work (An original comedy of early morning).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Richard Massingham

ABERDEEN: Palace	Jan. 25, 6 days
BIRKENHEAD: Rialto, Bebington	Jan. 28, 3 days
Plaza	Jan. 18, 3 days
BRIDGWATER: Palace	Jan. 18, 3 days
DARLINGTON: Alhambra	Jan. 11, 3 days
DORCHESTER: Palace	Jan. 28, 3 days
GODALMING: Regal	Jan. 25, 3 days
GUILDFORD: Playhouse	Jan. 11, 6 days
HULL: Regis	Jan. 28, 3 days
INVERNESS: La Scala	Jan. 18, 3 days
KETTERING: Electric Pavilion	Jan. 7, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Empire, Garston	Jan. 21, 3 days
LONDON: Capitol, Wembley	Jan. 18, 6 days
SALISBURY: Picture House	Jan. 25, 3 days

Beside the Seaside (A film of South Coast resorts).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

FALKIRK: Pavilion	Jan. 4, 6 days
LONDON: Studio Two	Jan. 25, 3 days
MIDDLESBROUGH: Pavilion	Jan. 14, 3 days
MOTHERWELL: Pavilion	Jan. 7, 3 days
STOKE: Hippodrome	Jan. 30, 6 days
WOLVERHAMPTON: Scala	Jan. 7, 3 days

Colourful Cairo (Travelogue).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

CHESTER: Tatler News Theatre	Jan. 25, 6 days
LONDON: Lansdowne, Berkeley Sq.	Jan. 7, 4 days
NOTTINGHAM: News House	Jan. 18, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Paragon	Jan. 11, 6 days

Community Life.
DISTRIBUTION: G-B.D.
PRODUCTION: G-B.I.

LONDON: Curzon	Jan. 1, indefinitely

Coral Island (A film of the Bermudas).
DISTRIBUTION: Radio

BRADFORD: Tennyson	Jan. 25, 3 days
BRIDLINGTON: Lounge	Jan. 28, 3 days
DOUGLAS: Picture House	Jan. 11, 6 days
LEEDS: Capitol	Jan. 21, 3 days
NORWICH: Capitol	Jan. 11, 3 days
ROCHDALE: Palace Tudor	Jan. 21, 3 days

Cover to Cover (A documentary of book production).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Alexander Shaw

BIRMINGHAM: Gaumont Palace	Jan. 4, 6 days
West End	Jan. 11, 6 days
BRISTOL: Regent	Jan. 11, 6 days
CHELMSFORD: Ritz	Jan. 4, 6 days
COVENTRY: Gaumont Palace	Jan. 4, 6 days
DERBY: Gaumont Palace	Jan. 4, 6 days
GUILDFORD: Playhouse	Jan. 25, 6 days
LEICESTER: City	Jan. 18, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Casino	Jan. 11, 3 days
LONDON: Capitol, Wembley	Jan. 4, 6 days
Regal, Golders Green	Jan. 4, 6 days
Tower, Peckham	Jan. 4, 6 days
READING: Pavilion	Jan. 25, 6 days
SALISBURY: Picture House	Jan. 11, 6 days

Dragon of Wales (A travelogue which tries to tackle economic conditions).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: W. B. Pollard

DUMFRIES: Regal	Jan. 14, 3 days
MATLOCK: Cinema House	Jan. 21, 3 days

Dragon of Wales—*continued.*

ROCHDALE: Hippodrome	Jan. 7, 3 days
STRATFORD-ON-AVON: Picture House	Jan. 18, 3 days

Fire Fighters (Film of the London Fire Brigade).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Peter Colin

BIRMINGHAM: Pic. Hse., Northfield	Jan. 14, 3 days
BRIDLINGTON: Palace	Jan. 21, 3 days
CARLISLE: City	Jan. 4, 3 days
EDINBURGH: Regent	Jan. 4, 6 days
LONDON: Monseigneur, Piccadilly	Jan. 11, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Tower, Ancoats	Jan. 7, 3 days
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: Adelaide, Benwell	Jan. 18, 3 days
NORTHAMPTON: Exchange	Jan. 7, 3 days
SHEFFIELD: Hillsboro Park	Jan. 28, 3 days

For All Eternity (A film of English cathedrals).
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

AYR: Orient	Jan. 7, 3 days
BLACKPOOL: Rendezvous	Jan. 28, 3 days
DOVERCOURT: Regent	Jan. 25, 3 days
GREENGATES: Cinema	Jan. 7, 3 days
PAISLEY: Picture Theatre	Jan. 21, 3 days
PETERHEAD: Playhouse	Jan. 28, 3 days
SOUTHPORT: Trocadero	Jan. 17, 7 days
STOCKTON-ON-TEES Regal	Jan. 4, 6 days

Gentlemen in Top Hats and Gentlemen in Crowns (A retrospect of European events for the last 40 years).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
PRODUCTION: A. B. Svensk Filmindustri
ENGLISH VERSION: Donald Taylor

CHESTER: Tatler News Theatre	Jan. 4, 6 days
LEIGH (LANCS): Cinema	Jan. 18, 6 days
LONDON: World News, Praed Street	Jan. 14, 3 days
MATLOCK: Cinema House	Jan. 14, 3 days

Happy Hampstead (North London's playground, in many moods).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: R. B. Pearce

CRAYFORD: Princess	Jan. 28, 3 days
ERITH: Picture House	Jan. 28, 3 days

Heart of an Empire.
DISTRIBUTION: M.G.M.
PRODUCTION: Strand Films
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

BOLTON: Carlton	Jan. 25, 3 days
BRIDLINGTON: Lounge	Jan. 13, 3 days
LOOE: Pavilion	Jan. 7, 3 days

The Immortal Swan (Record of the life of Pavlova).
DISTRIBUTION: Ace Films

LONDON: Tatler Theatre, Charing Cross Road	Jan. 18, 6 days

Islands of the Bounty (Travelogue).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.

ACCRINGTON: Hippodrome	Jan. 25, 6 days
CREWE: Empire	Jan. 7, 3 days
GLASGOW: Arcadia, Bridgeton	Jan. 21, 3 days
Kings	Jan. 14, 3 days
WARRINGTON: Grand	Jan. 28, 3 days

Key to Scotland (Edinburgh Documentary).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Marion Grierson

BIRKENHEAD: Super	Jan. 4, 6 days
BIRMINGHAM: Pic. Hse., Northfield	Jan. 28, 3 days
GLASGOW: Picture House, Parkhead	Jan. 14, 3 days
Princes, Springburn	Jan. 7, 3 days
Waverley, Shawlands	Jan. 7, 3 days
KETTERING: Electric Pavilion	Jan. 4, 3 days
LIVERPOOL: Rivoli	Jan. 21, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Tatler News Theatre	Jan. 18, 6 days

Men Against the Sea (Documentary of North Sea trawling).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph

ASHTON: Majestic	Jan. 18, 6 days

Men Against the Sea—*continued.*

BRISTOL: Hippodrome, Bedminster	Jan. 18, 6 days
KESWICK: Alhambra	Jan. 15, 2 days
LIVERPOOL: Empress	Jan. 7, 3 days
MANCHESTER: Cosmo, Gorton	Jan. 18, 3 days
Rota, Reddish	Jan. 25, 3 days
Tower, Ancoats	Jan. 4, 3 days
OXFORD: Ritz	Jan. 11, 6 days
PORTSMOUTH: Cinenews	Jan. 21, 3 days

Mickey Mouse.
DISTRIBUTION: United Artists
PRODUCTION: Walt Disney
Mickey's Circus.

LONDON: Tatler Theatre, Charing Cross Rd.	Jan. 11, 6 days

The Alpine Climbers.

LONDON: Tatler Theatre, Charing Cross Rd.	Jan. 4, 6 days

Night Mail (Documentary of the Travelling Post Office).
DISTRIBUTION: A.B.F.D.
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit.
DIRECTION: Harry Watt and Basil Wright

PLYMOUTH: Virginia House, Palace St..	Jan. 8
SHIPSTON: Picture House	Jan. 28

Northward Ho! (A voyage round the coast of Norway).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: C. E. Hodges

CARLISLE: Lonsdale	Jan. 25, 6 days
COLCHESTER: Headgate	Jan. 7, 3 days
GREENOCK: B.B. Cinema	Jan. 25, 3 days
LEEDS: Tatler News Theatre	Jan. 18, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Tatler News Theatre	Jan. 21, 3 days
NORTH SHIELDS: Princes	Jan. 11, 6 days
WICK: New Pavilion	Jan. 11, 3 days

Living Jewels (The minute animals that live in the surf filmed for the first time).
DISTRIBUTION: Radio

BARNSLEY: Pavilion	Jan. 18, 6 days

Secret Hiding Places (A film of the many priest holes in English country houses).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
DIRECTION: Granville Squiers

BIRKENHEAD: Plaza	Jan. 25, 3 days
BRISTOL: Hippodrome	Jan. 18, 6 days
LEICESTER: Palace Theatre	Jan. 18, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Corona	Jan. 18, 3 days
Empress	Jan. 18, 3 days
Gaumont Palace	Jan. 7, 3 days
Magnet	Jan. 25, 3 days
Rivoli	Jan. 28, 3 days
WAKEFIELD: Empire	Jan. 18, 6 days
WOLVERHAMPTON: Queens	Jan. 21, 3 days

Secrets of Nature.
DISTRIBUTION: G-B.D.
PRODUCTION: Mary Field for G-B.I.

LONDON: Tatler Theatre, Charing Cross Road	Jan. 18, 6 days

Song of Ceylon (Documentary of Ceylon).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
PRODUCTION: John Grierson for G.P.O. Film Unit.
DIRECTION: Basil Wright

LONDON: Regent, Tooting	Jan. 18, 3 days
Wembley Hall, Wembley	Jan. 25, 3 days
OXFORD: Scala	Jan. 25, 3 days
SLOUGH: Palace	Jan. 4, 3 days
SOUTHAMPTON: Picture Theatre, Woolston	Jan. 18, 3 days

Trolley Ahoy (Colour cartoon).
DISTRIBUTION: Radio
PRODUCTION: Burt Gillett

DUNDEE: Palace	Jan. 11, 6 days
Plaza	Jan. 11, 6 days
EXETER: Empire	Jan. 7, 3 days

FILM GUIDE

Shorts (cont.)

HULL: Cecil — Jan. 18, 6 days
Dorchester — Jan. 18, 8 days
MORECAMBE: Palladium — Jan. 10, 7 days

Underground Farmers (The work of the ants in South America).
DISTRIBUTION: Radio
BOURNEMOUTH: Premier News — Jan. 11, 6 days

Under the Water (French documentary with unusual submarine photography).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Marcel de Hubsch
COLCHESTER: Regal — Jan. 25, 6 days
FOLKESTONE: Playhouse — Jan. 24, 7 days
GUILDFORD: Playhouse — Jan. 18, 6 days
HULL: Regis — Jan. 21, 3 days
Rex — Jan. 14, 3 days
Royalty — Jan. 4, 3 days
LONDON: Coronet, Camberwell — Jan. 28, 3 days
Regal, Golders Green — Jan. 25, 6 days
Regal, Wimbledon — Jan. 18, 6 days
Wembley Hall, Wembley — Jan. 28, 3 days
PORTSMOUTH: New Theatre — Jan. 31
UXBRIDGE: Savoy — Jan. 1, 2 days

Waif's Welcome (Colour cartoon).
DISTRIBUTION: Radio
PRODUCTION: Burt Gillett
CHESTER: Gaumont Palace — Jan. 4, 6 days
Music Hall — Jan. 4, 6 days
HULL: Carlton — Jan. 18, 3 days
Savoy — Jan. 14, 3 days
MORECAMBE: Palladium — Jan. 17, 7 days

Zambesia (A journey up the Zambesi by foot and 'plane).
DISTRIBUTION: Kinograph
PRODUCTION: Rhodesian Film Productions
COMMENTARY: Alan Howland
BARNSLEY: Empire — Jan. 11, 6 days
BIRKENHEAD: Super — Jan. 11, 6 days
LIVERPOOL: Casino — Jan. 14, 3 days
Rivoli — Jan. 4, 3 days
REIGATE: Majestic — Jan. 11, 6 days
WEYMOUTH: Regent — Jan. 18, 6 days

Advertising Films

On Parade (Puppet film in colour).
DISTRIBUTION and PRODUCTION: Gasparcolor for Horlick's Malted Milk Co.
DIRECTION: George Pal
BATH: Forum — Jan. 4, 6 days
BRISTOL: Embassy — Jan. 18, 6 days
GUILDFORD: Playhouse — Jan. 25, 6 days
HARROW: Coliseum — Jan. 18, 6 days
HASLEMERE: Rex — Jan. 14, 3 days
HULL: Rex — Jan. 18, 3 days
LONDON: Carlton, Acton — Jan. 4, 6 days
Granada, Wandsworth — Jan. 4, 6 days
Monseigneur, Leicester Sq. — Jan. 4, 6 days
Regal, Wimbledon — Jan. 18, 6 days
Savoy, Willesden — Jan. 4, 6 days

Foreign Films

Bonne Chance! (French comedy).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Sacha Guitry
STARRING: Sacha Guitry, Jaqueline Delubac
AYRSHIRE: Film Society — Jan. 10
HEREFORD: Film Society — Jan. 22

Ernte.
DIRECTION: Geza von Bolvary
STARRING: Paula Wessely
LONDON: Academy — Jan. 1, indefinitely

Fear (French drama of a waif in Paris).
DISTRIBUTION: Reunion
DIRECTION: V. Tourjansky
LONDON: Curzon — Jan. 5, indefinitely

Foreign Films (cont.)

La Kermesse Heroique (French comedy of the seventeenth century).
DIRECTION: Jaques Feyder
STARRING: Francoise Rosay, Jean Murat
LONDON: Studio One — Jan. 1, indefinitely

Marchand D'Armour (French satire on the film industry).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Edmond Greville
STARRING: Jean Galland, Francoise Rosay
SCUNTHORPE: Film Society — Jan. 27

The Student of Prague (Austrian sound version of the famous silent film).
DISTRIBUTION: Denning
DIRECTION: Arthur Robison
STARRING: Adolph Wohlbruck ..
Dorothea Wieck
LONDON: Regent, Tooting — Jan. 18, 3 days

Feature Films for January Release

Anthony Adverse (Warner Bros.)
DIRECTOR: Mervyn Leroy
STARRING: Fredric March.
Olivia de Havilland
Edmund Gwenn
Claude Rains

Broken Blossoms (Twickenham)
DIRECTOR: Hans Brahm
STARRING: Dolly Haas
Emlyn Williams

Bullets or Ballots (First National)
DIRECTOR: William Keighley
STARRING: Edward G. Robinson
Joan Blondell

Case of the Velvet Claws (Warner Bros.)
DIRECTOR: William Clemens
STARRING: Warren Williams

Counterfeit (Columbia)
DIRECTOR: Erle C. Kenton
STARRING: Chester Morris
Margot Grahame
Marian Marsh

Rhythm on the Range (Paramount)
DIRECTOR: Norman Taurog
STARRING: Bing Crosby
Frances Farmer

San Francisco (M.-G.-M.)
DIRECTOR: W. S. Van Dyke
STARRING: Clark Gable
Jeanette MacDonald
Spencer Tracy
Jack Holt

Show Boat (G.F.D.)
DIRECTOR: James Whale
STARRING: Irene Dunne
Paul Robeson

White Angel (Warner Bros.)
DIRECTOR: William Dieterle
STARRING: Kay Francis
Ian Hunter

Continental News

Among the films Jean Renoir has in mind is one of the French Revolution—for he finds that only by using a historical background can he adequately comment on modern political problems. Thus his film will include, as it were incidentally, analogies to the present day, from which the audience can draw its own conclusions.

He proposes to build up the film by a series of sketches rather than by a story, sketches of the secret traffics in arms of the time, of the sordid profiteerers, the capitalists, the aristocrats of France fighting in the army of the Emperor of Austria. He will show the Revolution from the point of view of the starving workman, storming the Bastille; he will only portray Louis XVI as, on the fatal day, sublimely ignorant of the wretched state of his rising subjects, he writes in his diary, "I shot a stag in the forest to-day. . . ."

Renoir aims at pointing out the humour and irony of historical situations,

This film—as yet untitled—is to end with the victory of Valmy and the *Marseillaise*.

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Jean Painlevé, the instructional film director, has completed a film in Gasparcolor with the co-operation of Rene Bertrand, the sculptor. The story is taken from Perrault's "Bluebeard."

The figures used are modelled from "plastiline," a type of clay, and the movements are caused by a slight change for each shot, on the same principle as the "multiple" puppet films. The scenery and decorations are also of "plastiline," being modelled on thin wooden planks, as on a clay relief sketch. Sometimes the bright colours of the "plastiline" are painted over with gold and silver.

The film was actually shot on a large trick table, with a rounded heaven as a background and horizon, giving the impression of distance.

Painlevé is now working on a medical instructional film.

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Marceau Pivert, who controls the radio and film departments in the French cabinet, plans many changes.

Three years ago, A. de Monzie, the minister of education, attempted to reorganise the industry; later, Henri Clerk, the film deputy, worked for a change in the system of film taxation. To-day M. Pivert is fighting against the dumping of cheap American films on the French market, and is seeking to abolish the agreement between France and America by which a free importation is allowed for 94 dubbed films each half-year. He also opposed an agreement with Italy, which compels France to make at least two films a year in Italian studios in order to use the revenues of French films shown in the country.

In spite of his nationalistic measures to benefit French film production, M. Pivert is meeting much opposition from sections of the industry, especially since he is reported to intend collecting royalties for the authors from box-office takings, an action not likely to be popular with exhibitors, distributors and producers.

Marceau Pivert, with strong left wing tendencies, also promises steps for the re-organisation of broadcasting on a socialistic base.